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CALAMITY ROW: OR

THE SUNKEN REEFORTS

JOHN R. MUSICK.

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BY

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CALAMITY ROW;

OR,

THE SUNKEN RECORDS.

BY

JOHN R. MUSICK,

AUTHOR OF "THE BANKER OF BEDFORD," "HERBERT ORTON," "BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER," ETC., ETC.

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CALAMITY ROW

CHAPTER I.

THE HUMAN WHIRLPOOL.

"WESTWARD the star of empire takes its way," is an expression as truthful as poetic. So far back as the mind of man runs, the migration has been toward the setting sun, until civilization has girdled the earth. Imagination, like a current, set in from the East, and for nearly three hundred years, has been flowing westward. It has struck the surf-beaten shore of the Pacific, and counter-currents have begun to roll back. We meet this reflux in the person of the restless nomad, the American, returning to the East. A hundred years ago New York sent forth pioneers to explore the unknown West, and now their descendants are returning to gaze in wonder on the changes which the years have wrought. From all directions come streams of emigration, which have a point of meeting, and, as at all points where currents meet, there is a tremendous whirlpool. In New York, where usually the emigrant first treads American soil, these currents and counter-currents seem to converge. As ocean currents bring together and roll into one heterogeneous mass the driftwood swept from every clime, so, when these human currents mingle, we find people, not from every

nation only, but from almost every locality. The refluent western tide seems to meet the great tide surging from the East, and the people mingle until specific local characteristics are lost in the blending of races. In no part of that great city is this amalgamation more prominent than in Calamity Row.

Calamity Row is in the eastern part of the city, as nearly parallel with the river as a street can be which crooks one way while the river crooks another. It is two or three streets back from it, and from the cross streets can be plainly seen the bright sky beyond the buildings, long docks, forests of masts, and white sails gliding to and fro. Smoke from steamers and from the noisy little tugs puffing about, here and there, fills the air with soft, dark-tinged clouds. It is a street of tenement houses, saloons, small stores, and shops. The buildings, tall and dark, and begrimed by the smoke and dust of years; the dull, dingy place is what the police characterize as "tough."

A tangled network of iron rails marks out the course of numerous street-railways; and these failing to meet the demands of the public, an elevated railway has been erected, which adds to the darkness, dirtiness and din of Calamity Row. With horse-cars, steam-cars, rattling drays, wagons, and junk dealers' carts, Calamity Row is in a constant uproar. The cobble-stones are dark and shiny, covered with black ooze and mud. Calamity Row is always noisy, always crowded. Millionaires and paupers hurry over the uneven pavements, jostling each other; and the rattling and roaring of wheels over the slippery stones is enough to drive quiet-loving people mad.

Dwellers on Calamity Row seem to have grown accustomed to the din; they talk habitually in loud tones, but as conversation is rather difficult, under these cir-

cumstances, many of the inhabitants become sparing of their words which gives them an air of moroseness.

On a corner of the street, in the best store-room, which was narrow and mean, was the shop of Mrs. Joyce, a dealer in ribbons, laces, and cheap fancy-goods. Mrs. Joyce, with one assistant, managed her small store. The living apartments were in the rear, and the kitchen down in the basement, all invisible to her customers. Next to her store was a small cobbler's shop; the small, plain board sign bearing the inscription "J. Ruggles, repairing neatly done." The cobbler's iron-gray head could be seen through the window bobbing up and down, as he pegged patiently away. Next his shop was a saloon, with the odor of soured beer about it, and one or two old topers always lingering near. The remainder of the street is occupied by small shops, stores, and saloons on the first floor of the buildings, and miserable tenements above, with here and there a shutter hanging by one hinge, or a pale, wearied face looking from another.

Notwithstanding the hurry and bustle of the street, the cars, and carts, and crowding pedestrians, there are many children, infants even, playing on the dirty pavement. Their pinched features tell of hunger, filth, and squalid misery. The autumn brings to them no ripening harvest, no golden fruit; the spring no birds, swelling buds, nor perfumed breezes. They know little of nature save in unlovely human form, or in the stunted trees that grow out of the solid stone pavement. These trees are few in number, and dwarfed and gnarled; their bark blackened with smoke. Their foliage droops in the close and stifling atmosphere, that is charged with disagreeable odors.

The boys of Calamity Row are busy. Mischief is their chief occupation. One or two sell the morning and

evening papers, and one or two others carry boot-black boxes over their shoulders, but the majority have no occupation. The largest, a lad of twelve or thirteen, seemed their acknowledged leader.

One evening, Old Granny Gride sat in her stall on the corner, watching the boys. They were engaged in tormenting an Italian rag-picker, who, with his bundle on his back, and hook in hand, was angrily defending himself. There was a scowl on her face, that was rather the result of near-sightedness than real ill-humor. Granny's dirty brown box was just large enough to cover herself and her few jars and boxes of nuts, stale candies, indigestible cakes, and wormy fruit. On the side fronting the houses was a narrow counter, on which her dust-covered wares were exposed for sale.

Her yellow, wrinkled face paled, and the scowl upon it deepened, as she saw the boys prepare to "fire stones," at the rag-picker. Granny Gride had no fear of personal danger, but one of those stones might play sad havoc among the glass wares of her little store. She scowled and shivered, and shook her head, until the white frill of her cap trembled. Her small, deep-set eyes scintillated with fury, when a stone hurled by one of the boys struck her dwelling. Thrusting her head out at the small aperture, she screamed:

"Jake, Jake!"

Owing to her infirmity, Granny Gride could not distinguish one ragged imp from another, but she knew from his past history, that "Jake" was their leader. If Jake heard her, he made no answer. The Italian finding that he was getting the worst of the battle, was beating a retreat. The line of retreat was past Granny Gride's peanut stand.

"Jake, Jake!" the old woman again shouted, with

her head out of the aperture, and her yellow snags of teeth gnashing above the counter. "That kid ought to be hung. He's at the bottom of all the devilment that's done."

She scowled most savagely at a boy a short distance away, who, though not actively engaged himself, seemed urging and directing the movements of the others.

"Pick up stuns, b'ys!" he shouted hoarsely. "Hurl 'em at 'im! We'll learn 'im to slap a little boy agin."

"We'd better git, boys," suggested a timid urchin. "A cop 'll come 'long d'rectly, and nab us all in."

"Nev'r you mind, I'll look out for cops," shouted Jake.

The rag-picker had taken momentary refuge behind a column of the elevated railway. Whizzing stones struck, "cling, cling," against the iron pillar, and cart-men and car-drivers swore and cracked their whips at the boys, who kept out of their reach, and continued hurling stones at the rag-picker. A train rushed overhead, for a moment drowning all with its tremendous roar, leaving billows of snowy vapor to fade away before the third-story windows.

"Jake, Jake, ye good-for-nothin' loafer, ef ye break any o' my things, I'll hev ye sent to the Tombs."

"I ain't doin' nothin', Granny," cried Jake, whose keen whistle still guided the movements of his companions, as the bugle guides the movements of the cavalry.

"Yes, you are."

"What'm I doin'?"

"Firin' stuns agin my stall."

"I ha'n't fired a single stun," Jake answered, with another whistle, which evidently signified to his companions that they were to drive the Italian from behind the pillar of iron. No commander ever had more com-

plete command over his troops, than this dirty faced urchin of his little band of ragamuffins.

"A cop is comin', Jake!" cried one.

"Where?" the grimy commander asked.

"'Bout three blocks away."

"Oh we'll get him out o' there afore he comes."

The terrified Italian turned to fly, but was surrounded and pelted fiercely. He had learned the folly of charging his enemies, and, considering discretion the better part of valor, fled down the street, the boys in full pursuit. With wild cheers they let fly a volley of stones at him. There was a shriek from Granny Gride. One of her jars was broken.

"You'll ay fur it, you'll pay fur it!" the hag yelled.

The boys, dismayed at the near approach of a policeman, began to fly. Jake, the ring-leader, had been so, much interested in the punishment of the Italian, that he forgot the policeman, but the old vender of withered apples, and indigestible cakes, near-sighted as she was saw the officer. Though too much enraged to speak her wild gesticulations attracted his attention, and, pointing in the direction of Jake's voice, she made the policeman understand that he was the malefactor.

Jake was still enjoying the discomfiture of the ragpicker, when he was seized by the guardian of the peace. He made one tremendous effort to break away, but was held with an iron grasp. The boy, after three or four ineffectual efforts to escape, resorted to the usual method of surprised remonstrance.

"What ye got me fur?" he asked.

"You are up to your old tricks," said the policeman, shaking him savagely.

"I ain't done nothin'," cried Jake, "what d'ye want to go an' pull a pore kid like me fur?"

"Come along!" said the policeman, dragging him by the collar of his ragged jacket.

His companions, awed into sudden silence by the presence of the "cop," had taken refuge in corners, from whence they watched the result of the capture. Street-cars thundered by, wagons rattled over the stony street, the shouts of teamsters, and shrill whistle of carmen, mingled with the unlucky boy's pleading.

The sight of a boy struggling in the grass of a policeman, is sure to collect an idle, eager crowd. Fine loafers, genteel gamblers, and low roughs, thronged the pavement, crowding the foot-travelers out into the street. Teamsters shouted, swore, and lashed, their horses, and the mass of people swayed hither and thither like a vessel on the waves of a troubled sea.

"Here's the boy!" shouted the policeman, dragging Jake up to Granny Gride's stall, "What has he done?"

For answer she pointed to the broken candy-jar, and scowled.

"I didn't!" shouted Jake, squirming and twisting.

"No, he didn't," cried one of Jake's companions, who dared risk his own safety for his companion.

"Did you see the boy who threw the stone?" the policeman asked.

"Yes, I did," the boy answered.

"Who was it?"

"I don't know him," said the little fellow; "but it was the one that fired stuns at the rag-picker, an' run away. Jake an' me done nothin'."

"He did, he did!" yelled Granny Gride, her chin quivering with rage. "He throwed the stun! He does all the mischief!"

"This boy?" asked the policeman, nodding at Jake.

"Yes," answered Granny Gride, scowling at the prisoner.

"Will you swear he threw the stone?" asked the policeman.

"He was with the others; I'd swear to that," screamed the old woman.

"I didn't throw no stuns," persisted Jake.

"He was makin' the others do it," cried Granny, glaring her hate at the boy. "He was aggin' 'em on."

"Then you can't swear positively that he is the boy who broke the jar?" said the policeman.

"No, not exactly," answered Granny, scowling at the officer. "I am near-sighted, and a little distance away, can't tell one kid from another. But he's their leader, he's a good-fur-nothin' scamp, he is."

Several more of Jake's companions, growing bold, now came forward to testify to his innocence. At this movement, a gray-haired man in shirt-sleeves, with a greasy leather apron tied round his waist, came elbowing his way through the dense crowd, and stopped in front of Granny Gride's stall. It was Joe Ruggles, the cobbler.

"What's broke, Granny?" he asked.

"My glass jar," was the answer.

"Well, what's it wo'th?"

"Twenty cents."

"Let Jake go," continued Ruggles, in the loud tone of voice, which long residence on Calamity Row had made habitual, "and I'll pay for it."

This suited Granny, especially as the jar had cost only thirteen cents. The policeman was not certain that a case could be made, and released Jake. The kind-hearted cobbler gave the peanut vender a handful of pennies, and returned to his dirty shop. The crowd dispersed, and Jake, without a word of thanks, shrank away to seek other mischief.

CHAPTER II.

A PARSONAGE VISIT.

QUITE in contrast with Calamity Row, was the quiet, cosey little parsonage on Fullman street. It was the home of the Rev. William Dempster. Mr. Dempster was a quiet man, and not a great man. His eloquence never soared so high as to attract the world; but he was an earnest Christian. Quiet and unassuming, he was the embodiment of good sense and true Christianity. His unswerving faith had cheered the dark days of his early ministry, and never since had failed him or his sweet, patient wife.

"What are you thinking of, my dear?" the minister asked, closing his book, and laying it on the table at his side. "I am sure your mind was not on what I was reading. Come now, Martha, am I not right?"

Turning her soft brown eyes on him, she dropped the needlework, on which she was engaged, in her lap, and said,

"I must admit, William, that my mind was busy with other things."

"What were they?"

"Oh, so frivolous it is not easy to confess."

The minister fixed his eyes upon his wife's smiling face.

"I was out shopping to-day, and failing to find the goods I wanted where I usually trade, I went to a small establishment on a corner of that street called Calamity Row."

"I hope you do not often choose it for such expeditions," interrupted her husband.

"No, this was my first experience," said Mrs. Dempster. "But let me tell you what I saw——"

"Let me guess,—a dancing bear," said Mr. Dempster, with a smile.

"No, it was a girl," his wife returned.

"A girl? Is a girl, then, so very unusual a sight on Calamity Row?"

"This girl was different from others, William."

"Deformed, hideous?"

"On the contrary, she was perfect. She had the sweetest face, the sweetest expression, and largest deep-blue eyes I ever saw, making me think of the angels; I never saw any one so beautiful."

"My dear, perhaps you allowed your admiration to silence your judgment," said the husband. "Remember, a beautiful face is sometimes but a beautiful mask."

"She wears no mask; she has nothing to conceal. It has been said that the eye is the window of the soul. If we may judge from those eyes, the soul within must be of spotless purity."

"Who is she?" asked the minister, becoming interested.

"Her name is Allie,—Allie Gray, she is Mrs. Joyce's shop-girl."

"And you have become infatuated with her?" asked the husband.

"It is not that her beauty fascinated me," said Mrs. Dempster," though she is beautiful; but her gentle modesty, her quiet contentment with her lot."

"Do you think her lot hard?" asked the pastor, his interest increasing.

"William, you must know that a shop-girl, especially on Calamity Row, must have a hard lot. Think of the many snares set for her feet, of the temptations in store

for a beautiful girl; and then take one look into that dingy shop, at a face almost angelic, and you can realize what her lot must be."

The minister gazed at the carpet, and admitted that this was a puzzling question. The door-bell rang; Mrs. Dempster, rightly surmising that it was some member of the church, making an evening call, rose, and went to answer it in person.

The minister, still sitting in his easy-chair, heard a babble of tongues in the hall-way, and knew his wife had found no stranger at the door. Two voices made all that clatter. One was his wife; the other, shriller, much louder, and with a nasal twang, did at least two-thirds of the talking. A moment later the door of the sitting-room opened, and his wife ushered in a tall woman, with a confident, self-assertive air, who held her head quite high; and a stout old gentleman, with a bald head, and a weak smile on his face.

"Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles," said the minister, rising. "Pray be seated. I am glad you came; the evenings are growing long, and wife and I get lonesome."

"We just dropped in," said Mrs. Sniffles, in her shrill, nasal tones. "We can't stay long."

"No, we can't stay long," echoed Mr. Sniffles in a drawling tone.

Mrs. Sniffles was usually first to express her mind, and her husband repeated her words like a parrot. Mr. Sniffles kept a small store up town. He was not wealthy, but he owned the house he lived in and one or two others, besides a fair business. He was a member of Mr. Dempster's charge, and one of the church stewards, though his wife seemed to act in the official capacity herself, instead of her husband. The chief of her desires was to enter the magic circle of New York society. Her

life had been spent in the struggle, and the goal was as far off as ever.

Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles seated themselves, and there was a moment's silence.

"Mr. Dempster," Mrs. Sniffles then broke out, sitting up very straight in her chair, "that was an excellent sermon last Sunday."

"Ya-as, that was an excellent sermon," repeated Mr. Sniffles.

The minister flushed slightly, but Mrs. Sniffles went on, her arms folded across her breast; "It was very excellent. The word must be spoken from the heart, and not from the head, to move sinners to repentance."

"Ya-as, it must be from the heart, and not from the head," echoed Mr. Sniffles.

"We are doing the Master's work," said the minister, reverently, "and whatever success we may attain, to Him belongs the praise, and not to ourselves."

"That is true, and yet," persisted Mrs. Sniffles, "we cannot but admire God's instruments. Bright and shining lights are sure to attract weak mortals."

"Ya-as, bright and shining lights are sure to attract us weak mortals," echoed Mr. Sniffles who sat listlessly in his chair, his eyes wandering about the room.

"And the Master himself, has said, 'Well done, good and faithful servant'; I call that praise," added Mrs. Sniffles.

"Ya-as, I'd call that praise," echoed Mr. Sniffles.

"I cannot think so," returned the minister. "If the faithful servant has done his allotted task, to say 'you have done your duty,' is not to praise him. If I have done well, I have done only what I should."

"Well, you are so versed in debate," said Mrs. Sniffles, with a little cackling laugh, "I shall not attempt to argue with you."

"It's no use to argue with Mr. Dempster," added Mr. Sniffles.

"It is I who fear discussion," said the minister with a smile. "I know Mrs. Sniffles' reputation as a debater, and would not undertake the discussion of a proposition if she was to be opponent."

"La! Mr. Dempster," returned Mrs. Sniffles, so pleased that her nose seemed inclined to lift in the air, "I always tell my friends that, without intending to flatter, you are quick to perceive a good quality in a weak mortal, and sure to make it known. Mr. Dempster is always ready to see the good qualities in those about him, and in some way to bring them into notice; but if one chances to allude to those he himself possesses, he shrinks. Mr. Dempster, you are inconsistent."

Mr. Sniffles repeated the assertion with a smile of approval at the sage remark of his wife. "However," resumed Mrs. Sniffles, briskly, "if the subject is to be changed, I shall claim the right of selection. I came here for a purpose."

"Ya-as, we came for a purpose," came the echo.

"I willingly yield you the choice," said Mr. Dempster courteously, "for I am anxious to know your purpose."

"Yes," said quiet Mrs. Dempster, "if we can in any way give you aid—"

"Oh, no, it's not I that want aid," answered Mrs. Sniffles, growing almost stately in her erect position; "I came to suggest a plan."

Mrs. Sniffles had suggested to him a great many plans; she had wearied the patience of many of Mr. Dempster's predecessors with her plans. Mrs. Sniffles was one of those active churchwomen who have an unlimited confidence in their own ability to manage a church better than the pastor. They intend no wrong, but their

misdirected zeal causes much trouble to the good man who chances to fall into their hands.

"This plan was suggested to my mind by a remark you made in your last sermon," Mrs. Sniffles went on, while Mr. Dempster lamented the ill-fated remark. "The thought has been intensified by reading in the papers this morning of the arrest of a boy on Calamity Row, for an assault on an apple-woman. You remember what you said in regard to the thousands of boys and girls homeless and on the road to ruin. It has lain like lead on my heart, and I have at last matured a plan to redeem all these souls."

"Ya-as, a plan to redeem every one of them," echoed Mr. Sniffles, with smiling confidence in his wife.

"If you can suggest a plan that will save from ruin the homeless boys and girls of New York, you will be one of the greatest benefactors of the age," said the minister.

"It can be done," asserted Mrs. Sniffles, with an assuring nod. "It will take time and perseverance. We must have the co-operation of all the churches in the city. We must appoint committees to take the city, street by street, and gather up the boys and girls, and bring them to Sunday schools."

"Our Sunday schools would not hold them, even if we could persuade them to come."

"Then build more," cried the sharp-voiced enthusiast. "They must be saved, and it can be done."

"Ya-as, it can be done," assented Mr. Sniffles.

"You have given me only the bare outlines of your plan, but to me it seems to lack practicability."

"How so?" asked Mrs. Sniffles, surprise checking her enthusiasm. "Committees are appointed to do charitable work, and certainly the reclaiming of these children will be charitable."

"It would be charitable," assented the minister; "but if sin is to be overcome in New York, it cannot be taken by storm. You could hardly get all the churches united, and not one-tenth of those children could be induced to enter a Sunday-school in their rags and dirt. Before the soul is reclaimed, the body must be provided for. I have learned the impossibility of influencing the mind of a man who has an empty stomach. When I have brought a street arab to my house, clothed and fed him, and kneel down to pray, he can think of God, and not the needs of a cold, starving body."

Mrs. Sniffles' enthusiasm was visibly diminished. She was willing to head a committee for the saving of souls, but the care of bodies was another matter. She was willing to devote her time to the duties of a chairwoman of a committee on ways and means to redeem the young; she would deliver long addresses, and might have been induced to offer advice and remonstrance to the waifs brought from the street, but when an expenditure of money was necessary, she drew back.

"Why, Mr. Dempster!" she broke out, leaning back in her chair. "You do not pretend to say that good seed sown will not take root!"

"That depends on the kind of ground on which the seed falls. If the soil is good, it will grow, but to sow seed on cobble-stones, is to waste one's energies. The husbandman prepares the soil for the seed before sowing. These children, to be prepared for the seed, must have food and clothes, and comfortable places of abode; when that is done, it will be time for your committees to attend to the wants of their souls."

Met with an argument she could not withstand, Mrs. Sniffles had no reply. She had hoped to become president of a society for saving the friendless children of the

metropolis, and, as chief of a wealthy and benevolent institution, to attain prominence in society. But all her fine theories were torn to shreds by this practical minister. Her husband was too completely overcome to echo his wife.

"We really must go, Isaias," she said, rising. "We have overstayed our time. We only just dropped in a moment."

"Mrs. Sniffles' plan melted like snow in April, at the idea of giving food and clothes to the poor children," remarked the minister, resuming his seat, after their departure. "I fear such an organization under her leadership will not prosper."

"I discovered while father was her pastor that her charity never assumed the substantial form of dollars and cents," said his wife.

"How is that?"

"It is sixteen years or more since then. A baby was left at the Orphan's Home. Mrs. Sniffles was one of the managers at the time, and as it was full, she took the child, but she kept it for two or three months only, and then finding that it added to her trouble and expense, sent it back to the asylum; so I never knew what became of the poor little thing."

CHAPTER III.

MRS. BILLINGTON'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

On one of the most quiet of the streets in the not clearly defined region between "up" and "down town," stood Mrs. Billington's boarding-house. Mrs. Billington was a sprightly widow of uncertain age, a thorough

woman of business, who looked sharply after her pay, and the comfort of her boarders. Her house was not one of the most fashionable of New York boarding houses, yet one could board there, and be fashionable; in fact, Mr. Van Orden, one of her boarders, had the *entrée*, as he said, to the best society. But he came of old Knickerbocker stock, and claimed admission to that so-called magic circle. Mr. Van Orden parted his hair in the middle, and wore an eyeglass. In "either" and "neither," he sounded the *i* long, and in speech and in dress was particular to fastidiousness, though he occupied a single room, the smallest in the house. Whether he was engaged in any business or not, few knew.

The next most important boarder was Mr. Humphrey Harrison, a cockney, who was an exceedingly fastidious person, and liked to be thought a gentleman of leisure. It was rumored that Mr. Harrison was connected with the nobility of England, and on the death of an uncle, now old and feeble, would inherit an earldom. In addition to these, Mrs. Billington had a very chatty lady boarder, a surly-looking policeman, and a lady and gentleman temporarily in the city.

Her boarding-house being near the medical colleges, Mrs. Billington hoped to fill it with students, when the term opened, and was not disappointed. On the first day, two young gentlemen applied for board and lodging.

Fred Saunders, one of these new boarders, had never been in New York, but had read much about the wicked city. He had come to it, fully prepared for the worst. Our western young man was certain that no woman in the metropolis could be as good and pure as those in his far-away home. In fact he was skeptical as to there being any righteous thing in the great city. Fred was

the only son of well-to-do parents. Young, with robust health, and a strong, clear intellect, there seemed no prize in life that he might not hope to grasp.

On his way to New York, he had fallen in with his present companion, a young man about his own age, named Horace Waters. Although strangers, both being bound for the same city, on the same business, they became acquainted, and soon fast friends. Horace, like Fred, was entering on his first course, and shared many of Fred's ideas. Both thought New York people all sharpers and rascals to be dreaded as much as the treacherous savage.

They found their way by some chance to Mrs. Billington's boarding-house, and were domiciled there a day or two before the opening of the term. On the morning of the second day after their arrival at Mrs. Billington's they started out for a stroll.

"Good mornin', fellers," said a cheerful voice, as they opened the hall door.

Coming up the steps was a singular looking individual. He seemed a Westerner and Southerner in one. He wore a broad-brimmed black felt hat, slouched a little on one side, and from beneath it shone a pair of bright, dark eyes. His sallow face was full and round, and a jet black mustache was on his upper lip. Apparently he was about thirty; he wore a short coat, a pair of checked pants, and heavy boots, and in his right hand carried an old, faded, and well-worn carpet-bag, which, like himself. was covered with dust. There was about him the air of ease and freedom common to men of his peculiar temperament.

"Good morning, sir," said Fred.

The stranger extended his hand after the cordial Southern manner, and shook the hands of both the young men

as heartily as though they were old friends, and then inquired:

"Is this Miss Billington's boardin'-house?"

"Yes," Fred answered.

"D'you fellers stop here?"

"Yes."

"I've jest got in town, and been lookin' round fur a a boardin'-house. Went over t' the college, and they sent me here."

"Are you going to attend college?" Fred asked, with some surprise.

"Yes,—that's what I come fur."

"What college will you attend."

"Bellevue Medical."

"That is where we are going," said Horace.

"Is that so? Well, I'm glad o'that. We'll git acquainted. Where ar' you fellers from?"

"Indiana and Ohio," they answered.

"Any kin?"

"No, never saw each other until we met on the train a week ago. Where are you from?" Fred ventured.

"I'm from Tennessee, 'mong the Cumberland Mountains. I graduated at Nashville ten years ago, and been practicin' but thought I'd come out here and rub up."

Fred thought he had come to a very good place to "rub up." The stranger deposited his carpet-bag on one side of the door, and drawing a red bandanna handkerchief from his coat, proceeded to wipe the perspiration from his face.

Rude as he was in manner and speech, there was something attractive about this young doctor from the wilds of the Cumberland Mountains. Be his medical knowledge ever so good, it was evident that his grammar had been neglected. He asked the names of our friends and gave his own:—David Crocket Stonebeater.

Mrs. Billington appeared, profuse with smiles and pleassant words, on ascertaining that another boarder had come. Fred and Horace promised the doctor to improve the acquaintance, and went out for their intended stroll.

"A singular character," said Horace Waters.

"Decidedly," Fred answered. "He has the air of a Western man, with the warm, genial nature of a Southerner. Unless I read him wrongly, he is bold as a lion, with a heart tender as a woman."

"I think you are right, Fred," said Horace.

"It is strange, a practicing doctor should be so illiterate and uncouth."

"I suppose his associations have been only among the illiterate."

After a pleasant walk, passing through Gramercy Park, down Broadway to Union Square, they returned just in time for lunch. Although their room fronted the street on the north, it was very pleasant. Sitting at the window, they could hear the roar on those more crowded thoroughfares, not more than two or three blocks away. On the opposite side of the street, a rag-and-bottle man, with an empty bag thrown over his shoulder, was crying: "Old rags—bott*les*, rags—bott*les*," with a resonant and not unmelodious rising inflection on the last syllable. A broom-peddler, with a bundle on his shoulder was, a little farther down the street, singing his monotonous song: "Buy a broom—new broom—sweep clean—new broom!" A discordant organ, was groaning and wheezing on a corner of the street, the dark skinned Italian watching the windows above, hoping to get a few pennies. A rag-picker, looking as if he had sprung from a dirt-heap, with a pack on his back, a basket on one arm, and his little iron hook in his hand, was darting about the street, digging now in a barrel of ashes, then in an

old box or barrel of garbage, hooking out a bone or a rag here, a small piece of pewter or a withered turnip there.

While our Western friends were gazing on these scenes, lunch-bell rang, and there was a rush of feet down the stairway above and below, as the boarders hastened to the lunch-table, with such zest as only hungry boarders know. When our friends entered the dining-room, they found two tables well filled. Mrs. Billington was present, smiling serenely, and chatting pleasantly, like a hostess entertaining guests. Through the window came the faint and far-off cry of the broom-vender and of the rag-and-bottle man, and the wheezy notes of the organ.

"Them fellers ain't very good at singin'," said a voice at Fred's elbow, and looking around he discovered that his neighbor was the Tennesseean.

"Their articulation is not faultless," Fred answered.

"That's the sorriest kind o' singin'. Half a dozen Tennessee niggers at a corn-shuckin' kin make more ginuine music than a raft-load o' them fellers."

Mr. Harry Van Orden, who sat opposite the Southerner, placed his eyeglass to his eye, and fixed upon the Tennesseean a glassy stare. Then, turning to his companion, Mr. Humphrey Harrison, he said:

"Ah! Mr. Harrison, do you know that fello'?"

"No, Hi never saw 'im before," the Englishman responded, with a sneer of contempt for all Americans.

"Nyther did I. Ah! he is very rude," said Mr. Van Orden.

The Tennesseean chanced to look across the table, and caught sight of Mr. Van Orden. The white shirt-front, diamond pin, gold studs, and sleeve-buttons, all bore evidence that Mr. Van Orden was capable of dressing in the most approved style, whatever his failings

might be. The Tennessean paused, his knife half raised to his lips, looking at Van Orden with the calm curiosity he would have bestowed upon some unknown animal, at a menagerie. From the American dandy his eyes wandered to the cockney. Mr. Harrison was attired very much after the style of Van Orden, and even more pronounced, more English in manner. The curiosity of the rustic physician from the Cumberland hills was aroused. He watched Mr. Van Orden's hair with a frank curiosity. His healthy mind was making gigantic efforts to read the men before him. The gentle nerves of the swells were unstrung by the stranger's influence, and the Englishman, turning to his American cousin, said:

"That fellow is 'orrible. See 'ow himpudent he stares at us. He is a stupid howl."

"Ah! don't mind him, my lord. He is a rude boor from the west," said Mr. Van Orden, drawing his napkin across his mouth. Since Mr. Harrison was so nearly related to the nobility, Mr. Van Orden frequently addressed him as "my lord," or "Sir Humphrey." "He has no sense of propriety or knowledge of etiquette. I shall inform Mrs. Billington I cannot be bored by such a horrid creature."

"So shall Hi. I'll change my boarding-'ouse," answered the disgusted Englishman.

With this dire resolve, Van Orden and the Englishman rose, and left the dining-room.

"I say," demanded the Tennesseean, as the door closed after them, "ain't them two fellers what you folks here call dewds?"

The question was put in a voice loud enough to be heard by all, and in such earnestness as to provoke general laughter. The Tennesseean was nicknamed "Ten-

nessee," a sobriquet which clung to him ever afterward.

The typical Westerner and Southerner among Mrs. Billington's boarders, was in strong contrast with the other type, the strange product of the refinement of the East. The tide which had swept westward was flowing back bearing new and fresh elements to mingle with the life of the East, in the whirlpool of the great metropolis.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VANDERBURGS.

It was a gloomy day. Fog from the Atlantic pushed its way up the two rivers, and spread all over the metropolis. All day long, since early dawn, the fog had spread over the city, and all day long the constant whistle of steamers on both rivers had been heard. Late in the afternoon the fog lifted, and coming in contact with cold air, condensed, and fell in a fine mist-like rain.

The streets were sloppy, and as evening drew on, the rain fell faster, soaking every unprotected pedestrian to the skin. Nowhere else is a rainy day so gloomy, so dispiriting, as in New York. Business was not prostrated, it never is in that great city, but it was impeded. Gazing down Broadway on a rainy day, the thousands of dripping umbrellas look not a little like a moving forest of giant black toadstools.

Mrs. Robert Vanderburg in her elegant Fifth Avenue mansion was sitting near the large bay window. Ordinarily it would admit a flood of light; but on this gloomy

day, the light hardly reached beyond the recess, and somber shadows stood out in the rear. Mrs. Vanderburg threw aside the novel she had been reading, and looked listlessly out through the dripping casement to the gloomy street without, almost unconsciously feeling the pleasurable contrast of the warmth and luxury within, as she noted the drenched garments and shivering forms of the passers-by. She wore a rich evening dress, which fell in vague lustrous folds about her figure. Her hair was crimped and her bangs were protected by the thinnest bits of lace, for she intended to go to the opera. She thought the book stupid, the weather stupid, and, in fact, all about her was stupid. The diamonds in her ear-rings flashed in the gloom. The jewels on the hands sparkled and scintillated, filling the apartment with flashing rays.

This lady was a member of the "first-class New York society." Her position in the past had been doubtful, but she seemed firmly established now. She was the wife of a millionaire. She lived in New York, which she pretended to detest, because New York was, after all, the only American city where one could get anything one wanted. On the whole, with her poetic furbelows, and well shaped, intelligent little face, she was a decidedly interesting woman. She was even more—she was pretty. Naturally she was shy, and had she not possessed a certain amount of vanity, she might have remained shy. Now, she was both diffident and importunate; extremely reserved at times with some of her friends, and strongly expansive with others. It was hinted that she despised her husband. She was his second wife, and much younger than he. He was an invalid, an ex-speculator, whom people called a cross old bear He was a member of the exchange, but seldom there of

late. Having made millions he had in a measure retired. He never went with Mrs. Vanderburg; and she, young, attractive and pretty, could not forego all pleasure, so went out alone, or with some friend. Mrs. Vanderburg could not have been over thirty, and her dark-brown eyes, auburn hair, and handsome face, made her look much younger.

It was hinted that she had not made her husband's life as happy as did his former wife, who was a bright genial flower, plucked from the Sunny South. Col. Robert Vanderburg's first wife and their only child had been lost on a steamer, which sunk just as it was entering New York harbor. The husband, who was in the city expecting them, was so shocked at their awful death, that for weeks his life was despaired of; but time, the great healer, brought him to apparent health; though he was ever after a sad man. The bodies of his wife and child had never been recovered, though he had made every effort to get them. He had served as colonel of a New York regiment in the war of the Rebellion, and it was during that time he wooed and won his first wife. Speculating in Wall Street tended to take his mind from the gloomy past, and financial ruin to him would have been a blessing. But fortune is deceitful, and often when we seek her not, she thrusts herself on us. Col. Vanderburg was already wealthy, and everything he touched seemed to turn to gold.

In the course of time the colonel married the second Mrs. Vanderburg. She was a belle, but her position in society was jeoparded by the failing fortunes of her father. He could not give this second wife the love he had bestowed on the first. His second marriage, indeed, was more of a business transaction than a love affair. But Col. Vanderburg was very much devoted to his young wife, though not frequently seen with her.

Having no children of their own they adopted the orphan daughter of Col. Vanderburg's brother. Miss Adelaide Vanderburg had been in the family of her uncle since her parents' death, which occurred when she was a child. She was now past eighteen, and had just made her *début* in society.

Adelaide was more like her aunt than her uncle. She was piquant, vivacious, and sparkling as the diamonds which graced her fair throat, arms and forehead. She was ambitious, and in early girlhood had vowed she would marry no one but a lord. Her uncle's wealth, which she would inherit, would certainly entitle her to nobility.

But she found lords difficult to obtain, and was betrothed to a wealthy young Wall Street speculator named Darlington. There was so wonderful a similarity between the tastes and desires of Adelaide and Mrs. Vanderburg, that they became fast friends and allies on all questions of mutual benefit.

Col. Vanderburg lived a morose and melancholy life in his study, to which few were admitted. His agents came to him and transacted such business as was necessary. He had great confidence in Edward Darlington, who had exhibited ability to take care of himself on Wall Street. He had a seat in the Exchange and was the confidential friend and adviser of the Colonel. He combined the elements of a thorough business man and society gentleman.

Mrs. Vanderburg rose from the sofa and, going to the window, drew the curtain aside, to gaze on the wet, gloomy street. The door opened, and Miss Adelaide entered. Miss Adelaide was tall, rather slender, and yet with just the least tendency to plumpness.

"Oh, aunt! is not this too bad?" she cried.

"The weather, you mean, Adelaide?"

"Yes, of course; what else could I mean?"

"It is a bore," said Mrs. Vanderburg, turning away as if tired of existence.

"It is so disagreeable, but we are going to the opera to-night, of course," continued Miss Adelaide, seating herself and tapping her little slippered foot upon the rug.

"Of course, my dear. I think Mr. Darlington is to come for us to-night."

"Yes, aunt, I had almost forgotten to tell you."

"Indeed, you must have your future husband very little in mind," said Mrs. Vanderburg.

"I think of him about as much as he does of me," she returned.

"What do you mean, Adelaide? Don't you love Edward?"

"Oh! I suppose so,—after my fashion. He is the nicest and richest young man of my acquaintance, but I was to have married a nobleman, you know, and then I could have gone to England, and been a great lady. But since I have been in the market no nobleman came round save a few old fellows, too horrible to look at. I guess Ed is the best I can do, and I like him real well; but then he is so devoted to stocks and dividends, and has little time to think of me."

"And how about yourself?" asked her aunt coolly.

"Ah, I have no objection to his spending all the time he desires on Wall Street. Society suits me, so I think we will get along very well."

Mrs. Vanderburg was cold, almost heartless, herself, and expressed no surprise at like qualities in others. The ladies were both seated near the broad and deep bay window, and gazed out on the crowded pavement. Many seemed suffering with the dampness and chill. One old beggar woman, with clenched hands, tottered along, her head bared to the rain. Next came a young girl, neatly

but not expensively dressed, wearing a waterproof, with cape made into a cap, and drawn over her head. She had a small bundle under one arm, and carried an umbrella. There was something indefinably sad about her. The dainty little feet tripped wearily over the slippery side-walk.

The ladies in their cosey parlor had no sympathy for the people who struggled along through cold and rain. Their misery served as a background to the picture in which their own good fortune stood out in bright relief.

"There is Edward's carriage," said Adelaide. The carriage drew up at the curbstone in front of the house, and a footman in livery opened the door. A handsome young man sprang out, and hurrying across the broad pavement passed up between the crouching lions on either side of the steps, and rang the bell. He had dark-gray eyes, brown curly hair and a superb mustache. A servant came and opened the door, and he was conducted to Mrs. Vanderburg's parlor. Both ladies greeted him, and he seemed about as welcome to one as to the other.

"It's a gloomy day, ladies," said Mr. Darlington, in his sparkling manner, seating himself on the sofa by Adelaide.

"It is unreasonable weather," returned Mrs. Vanderburg. "Everybody feels the effects of it."

"Perhaps that accounts for my cool reception," said Mr. Darlington, with a sly glance at Adelaide.

"Do you think I am cool?" she asked.

"Yes."

"It is just punishment to you for venturing out on such a day, and endangering your health," responded Miss Adelaide.

"Are you so careful of my health?" Mr. Darlington asked, fixing his eyes upon her.

"Of course I am. Should I not be?"

"Don't suffer any uneasiness on my account, and be ready for the opera this evening, without regard to the weather."

"Oh, we shall be ready," quickly answered Mrs. Vanderburg. "I am passionately fond of the opera, Mr. Darlington, and I need not tell you that Adelaide is as fond of it as myself."

"I have long studied her tastes and desires to gratify them," said Mr. Darlington. He started up briskly, as if he suddenly remembered the object of his visit, and said: "I came this afternoon to see Col. Vanderburg, but could not resist the temptation of a little pleasant chat before business (a bad precedent for a business man), and I just dropped in to see you, and to ask how you were enjoying this miserable day."

"Oh, we all have the blues," said Miss Adelaide, with an attempt at a sigh, fixing her large, dark eyes on her affianced husband. "Can you not stay with us?"

"No, I am a poor physician for a disease with which I am afflicted, and as my business with the Colonel is important, I beg to be excused," said Mr. Darlington, with a smile.

"Of course, if business is preferred to our society, we will excuse you," said Miss Adelaide, with a cold bow.

"No, dear Adelaide. Business men must neglect pleasant duties. But I cannot tarry longer, delightful as your society is. My carriage will be here at seven-forty-five. Be ready by that time, for the curtain rises promptly at eight." Kissing the jeweled hand which the fairy-like creature offered him, and saying gayly: "I know where the Colonel keeps himself," he hastened upstairs and came to the library, which he entered unannounced. There was quite a contrast between the sad-

faced man sitting before the blazing grate, and his gay young wife in the parlor. He was bowed down by premature age. Those wrinkles on his face were more the lines of care than the penciling of time. Wealthy and powerful as he was, he had an air of having been crushed. He seldom smiled, and an expression of perpetual sadness had settled on his features.

Mr. Darlington paused at the door. Col. Vanderburg had not heard him, and still sat gazing abstractedly into the grate. The intruder advanced to his side and called him by name. Looking up, the Colonel said:

"Why, Edward! Be seated and tell me what it is; I know that nothing save business would bring you?"

"You are right," said Darlington, smiling. "I came here to talk to you of a speculation."

"A stocks?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"Little River Railroad."

"Where is that road?"

"Out west."

The white head shook in a manner fatal to Darlington's hopes, and the voice of the invalid, faint but firm, said:

"No—it is not known."

"We can develop it and clear a cool million in three months."

"How?"

"Buy up all the stock."

"Do you mean buy up the entire road?"

"Yes, or a controlling interest. We could do it by negotiating a little."

Again the gray head shook and the feeble voice said, "If you lose, it would ruin you."

"But if I win I make a million at least." Darlington

had thrown himself in an arm-chair near. Col. Vanderburg fixed those sad blue eyes on him, and asked:

"Are you really anxious to own a railroad?"

"Well, yes," answered the young speculator, coolly twirling his mustache between his finger and thumb;—"That is, providing I can get you to help me." But Col. Vanderburg shook his gray head again in a way that was final, and said:

"No—I am too old and too infirm to run such risks. Besides, that small western road is too far away to be skillfully managed. The stock wouldn't sell."

"Then you absolutely refuse to go into the enterprise?" asked Darlington.

"I must," answered Col. Vanderburg, sadly. "It's a bad speculation; I would advise you to have nothing to do with it."

Knowing the stern, inflexible will of the white-haired man before him, Edward Darlington was convinced of the uselessness of any further attempt. He merely said: "Then I must look for assistance elsewhere," and changed the subject.

He did not remain long with Col. Vanderburg, but hurried down to the hall, just stopping at the parlor door a moment to assure the ladies that he would call at the appointed time, and donning his water-proof and hat, took up his cane, and hurrying into his carriage was whirled away into the misty rain.

CHAPTER V.

ALLIE GRAY.

If other portions of the city were gloomy, Calamity Row was doubly so. The great trestles and the elevated railway obscured the light of the brightest days; but when it grew so gloomy that somber shadows gathered in the elegant Vanderburg mansion, Calamity Row was dismal.

Old Granny Gride sat in her box waiting for customers, her face outlined by the white lace border of her cap. She resembled a half-exhumed mummy. A few pennies a day was the extent of her trade. Even if her profits were one hundred per cent., it would seem strange how she could support herself. Old Joe Ruggles, sitting at the dirty window of his shop, pegged away although it had grown so dark he scarce could see.

Mrs. Joyce's little shop was gloomy. Leaning on the counter behind which she was standing was a young girl, gazing out of the window at the noise and gloom, which settled down. It was a sweet, innocent face. I cannot say it was sad, yet it was by no means gay. She who had never been guilty of evil, could smile and be happy, even with life on Calamity Row. Gold cannot be contaminated by proximity of baser metals, neither was this pure soul smirched in the whirlpool of sin about her.

"I think we had as well close up shop, Allie," said Mrs. Joyce, from the apartment just back of the small shop.

"There may be some customers yet," said Allie, as she gazed out upon the muddy street.

"It is so gloomy," said Mrs. Joyce, as with her spec-

tacles mounted on her nose she came to the front apartment.

"It's very gloomy," and Allie sighed wearily, not sadly. "There is Jake—I do hope he will not get into mischief again, on uncle Joe's account.

"I believe Joe Ruggles did wrong," said Mrs. Joyce.

"Why—and in what way?" asked Allie, her large blue eyes growing round with astonishment.

"In paying for that kid's breaking Granny Gride's glass jar."

"Perhaps the lesson he learned will do him good," answered Allie, her large blue eyes growing melancholy. "Now Jake is going away, I am so glad on uncle Joe's account, as well as his own."

"Joe Ruggles is a dunce," said Mrs. Joyce. "No wonder he's poor as Job's turkey. A man always takin' the part of such loafers 'll die a pauper."

Allie made no response. She loved the old gray-haired cobbler and his wife. They had taught her infant lips to lisp the first word she ever uttered. It was they who taught her baby feet to walk, and reared her through helpless infancy, with all the love and care of fond parents. Their plain but honest faces were among her earliest recollections. No wonder she loved them. They who had taken in the little waif and brought her up to noble womanhood, were worthy of her love.

Allie Gray had been standing for some time leaning on the glass show-case. There was a look in those large blue eyes, which had been in them many times before; it expressed a longing which she knew was never to be satisfied. In earlier life this expression had been stronger than now; but time and a busy life on Calamity Row had partially driven it away.

"Can I go in and sit with uncle Joe and aunt Kate awhile?" she asked.

"To be sure, child, if you wish," answered Mrs. Joyce. "I don't think there will be much more to do to-day, and I can attend to it."

Allie threw a light shawl about her shoulders and darted into the dingy little shop of the cobbler.

"Why, Allie, little girl," cried the old man, "I am always glad to see you. Your face makes these dark days bright. There's a chair, dear, sit down ; I know you are tired."

With a smile on her pretty face Allie seated herself, and said :

"Uncle Joe, do you never tire yourself? There you sit from early dawn until late at night, pegging, pegging away, and never think of yourself."

"Why should I, child, when I've you and your aunt Katy to think of?"

"But you should think that you may wear yourself out one of these days."

"Don't know, child. I'm a pretty tough old fellow, and I'll last a long time yet. The fact is, I've been sitting on this bench for so many years pegging and pegging away, that I shouldn't feel right anywhere else."

If industry could have made Joe Ruggles rich he would have been as wealthy as Col. Vanderburg, the millionaire. But, alas, there are those who toil from dawn till dark the year round, and grow no richer in this world's goods. Joe Ruggles was of that class. He was not a spendthrift, but he made everybody's cares his own. His willingness to pay for the candy jar to screen a young scamp from just punishment, gives the key to his poverty.

"It's a gloomy day, girl," resumed the cobbler, pegging away upon an old shoe.

"Tis very dark," said Allie, "Where is aunt Katy?"

"Katy, old woman!" Here's Allie come," called the cobbler to some one in a rear apartment. In a moment there came from the dingy living-room at the rear, a woman about the age of uncle Joe. Her kind, motherly face was surrounded by a neat cap-border, and, notwithstanding the dreariness of the weather and dinginess of the shop, was cheerful.

"Allie!—my dear child, you never forget us, do you?" she cried.

"No, aunty, I never can," answered the beautiful young girl.

"God bless you, child," said the old lady. "You are a perfect treasure to our old hearts. I wish we were rich, for your sake."

"I'm afraid you would not be so good if you were rich, aunt Katy. You would be thinking of your wealth and little of me. Besides, if you were rich I should not owe you so much, even if you gave me more. What you give comes from the heart, and a blessing with it. If you were rich it might come from the purse, and with little thought of the act."

"No, no, it would make no difference with us," said the old lady. "I wish we were rich so we could give all ye wanted—"

"Oh, wife, wife! give us a rest on yer wishes and regrets," interrupted her husband, "In bewailin' our fate at not havin' more o' this world's goods, we lose the opportunity of enjoyin' what we have."

"That's just what your uncle Joe allus says," the old lady said. "He's the most contented man I ever saw. Why, he never complains no matter what happens."

"Ye, see, wife, there's so much good to be enjoyed in this world that I don't dare grieve at the little bad there may be. How ungrateful is a dyspeptic, who overloads

his stomach, makes himself sick and then grumbles at destiny. See this shoe," and he held up the shoe he was mending. "It's just like us. I'm puttin' some bits o' new leather on it, to fill up what holes were in it. The very places where the leather was weakest, are now the strongest. Them things we look on as misfortunes, frequently turn out to be blessings. Ain't that so, Alice?"

"I suppose so, Uncle Joe; you wouldn't say so if it wasn't," the girl responded.

"That's a good idee, girl," continued the philosopher, pegging away as if his life depended on his finishing the job at once. "Take things on faith. It takes a great deal o' faith in this world to insure happiness. We can't have too much faith. The Scriptures say, if we had faith, even as a grain o' mustard seed, we could remove mountains. Now, I believe that's true. It might take some picks, drills, shovels, and blastin' powder to help, but all the picks, shovels, drills and blastin' powder in the world, wouldn't shake a mole-hill without faith. My child, if we have doubts and fears o' the future, who kin be happy? Not one on us—not one on us," said the old philosopher, shaking his iron-gray head.

Aunt Katie was pleased with her husband's healthy philosophy. She loved the old man, who, through so many years of poverty, had always been cheerful and kind. Prosperity was a stranger to them, adversity a constant companion. Five children had been born to them, but all went to early graves. Other children grew strong and healthy in the squalid misery of Calamity Row, but theirs faded and died in the poisonous atmosphere. A week or two after burying their last, they received the little waif, Allie Gray, and they had considered her as taking the place of the dead baby. When she

was old enough and had received sufficient education, she sought employment with Mrs. Joyce, determined not to be longer an incumbrance on the good people who had reared her.

The door of the dingy shop opened, and a tall gentleman, muffled in a waterproof coat, and holding a dripping umbrella in his hand, entered.

"How d' ye do, sir?" said the cobbler to the stranger.

"Is this Mr. Ruggles?" asked the stranger.

"Yes, sir; J. Ruggles of Calamity Row," answered the cobbler, pegging away. "Be seated, mister."

"I am William Dempster, pastor of the Fullman Street Methodist Church," said the minister meekly, as he sat down in a chair.

"Oh, yes! you're a preacher!" said the cobbler.

"I am," answered the minister, not altogether certain of his welcome. But if he had any doubts, the remarks of the cobbler fully assured him.

"Well, I allers kinder liked preachers, though some of 'em are a little stuck up, and don't seem to take much stock in me; still I bear 'em no malice. It's all right—they do lots o'good, and if there are some high-fliers among 'em, it can't be helped. I won't say nothin' agin' their cloth."

"Are you a member of a church?"

"No sir, I don't belong to nothin', only my shop."

"I have been informed you are a Christian."

"Well, I can't say as I'm what's sometimes called a Christian; I believe in the doctrines, but don't practice 'em much in public. I don't belong to no church, but I believe in 'em. 'Cos some people who do belong to 'em are hypercrites, the church ain't to blame."

"Do you know a young lady who stays in the shop of Mrs. Joyce?"

"Why yes, o' course I do. That's her—Allie Gray, Mr. Dempster," said the cobbler, nodding toward the young girl.

Allie rose and bowed. Mr. Dempster observed that she was very pretty, with large blue eyes, and golden hair. There was a modesty about her, not common with shop girls on Calamity Row.

"My wife met you," continued the minister, after a short but awkward silence, "and was so much interested in you, that I have ventured to make this call unannounced, and uninvited. Mrs. Joyce said I would find you here."

"I have no recollection of meeting Mrs. Dempster." said Allie, somewhat surprised.

"Doubtless you have not," said Mr. Dempster. "Yet she remembers you. She called at your shop, a week or two ago, for some French edging."

"Perhaps—I serve a great many, whom I cannot remember."

"No doubt, Miss Gray,—but Mrs. Dempster does not forget you. I have come to invite you to attend our church."

"Ha ha, ha, ha!" laughed the cobbler. "Our Allie has been invited to church. Allie's a good girl, sir; and whether she goes to meetin' or not, don't make any difference."

"I am glad you are interested in her," said the minister. "I hope you and Mrs. Ruggles will also attend our church."

"Ha, ha, ha! we go to church! The old cobbler of Calamity Row in church! I don't object, but some o' your finer congregation might."

If Mr. Dempster's predecessors had failed to gather in the wheat from the tares of Calamity Row, he had deter-

mined not to neglect his duty. During his brief visit, he so impressed himself on the old cobbler, that they all agreed to attend his church. It was time to close up shop, and Allie bidding Uncle Joe and Aunt Katy good-bye, returned to her employer.

The old cobbler gazed into the face of his wife, and said:

"Katy, that girl is somebody, as sure as you live. I only wish I could tell her just who she is."

CHAPTER VI.

TENNESSEE AND THE LABORING MAN.

Of all characters Fred and Horace had ever met, the tall, broad-shouldered Tennesseean was the most peculiar. He was rude to a disagreeable degree; yet he was genial, honest, kind-hearted and brave. He was good-natured, even enjoying the jokes at his own expense. He would say: "Ef the boys kin make any fun out o' me let 'em hev' it." "Whar ar' ye gwine?" he asked one morning, as he met Fred and Horace in the act of leaving the boarding-house.

"Just out for a walk, that's all," said Fred.

"Ef you fellers ain't got no objection, I'd as lief go with ye as not."

"We have no objection," said Fred. "We would be pleased to have your company."

"I'll go. I kinder like to look about, and stretch my legs, anyhow."

They went down the quiet street, and were walking along an avenue in the direction of the college, when they came to a grocery store. In the display window were eggs, butter, and canvas-covered hams,

"Stop here, fellers," said Tennessee, abruptly halting.

"What are you going to do?" Horace asked, in some amazement.

"I'm goin' to buy some eggs."

"Eggs? What on earth do you want with eggs?" both Horace and Fred demanded, their amazement increasing.

"Eat 'em," was the laconic response.

"Can't you get eggs at your boarding-house?"

"Yes,—but they are cooked, and an egg biled hard enough to knock a bull down, is sorry eatin'."

Tennessee went toward the door of the store. The basement came out into the street, and a grating extended half-way across the sidewalk. He eyed the grating, much as a wary horse will a suspicious bridge. "I wonder if the thing will break through," he said. Reaching his toe forward like a boy testing ice on which he fears to trust his weight, he tried it, and then bounded quickly over. Safely in, Tennessee purchased half-a-dozen eggs, and rejoined his companions, putting the eggs in his coat pocket.

"Come on, fellers," he said, starting across Calamity Row. When about half-way over, an elevated railway train thundered above their heads. With a cry of alarm, Tennessee sprang from under the trestle-work and ran across the street. His companions followed, laughing at his fear. Wheeling about, he looked to see if they had gotten safely over.

"What was the matter?" Fred asked.

"I warn't gwine to 'low that ingine to drap down on my head," he answered. "It 'ud smash a feller to eternity."

"There is no danger," laughed Fred.

"Ye can't convince me o' that," answered Tennessee.

"It might be all right fur fifty years, and then, all of a sudding, come tumbling down on a feller. I ain't a gwine to run no chances."

Started down the street, Tennessee paused long enough to crack the small end of an egg on a lamp-post. Picking off the shell, he inserted both his thumbs into the small hole, and raising the egg above his mouth, swallowed its contents at a gulp.

"*No, sir;* fellers," continued Tennessee, dropping the empty shell on the pavement, and taking a second egg from his pocket, "ye don't ketch me standin' under a railroad train, when it's gwine like lightnin'. Somethin's liable to give way." He paused long enough at a dry-goods box to crack a second egg—"Then the whole consarned thing would come down on a feller."

He swallowed this egg in a manner similar to the first. Jake, the mischief-maker of Calamity Row, was near enough to observe the singular sight, and calling to some comrades about him, said:

"Jest look there, b'ys, there's a feller suckin' eggs on the street, jest like he war eatin' apples."

"D'ye s'pose they sell artificial eggs?" Tennessee asked.

"I should think not," Fred answered.

"I didn't know but what as these Yankees mought get some cheap way of manufacturin' eggs. That last one wan't no egg, shore as you ar' born; no hen ever laid that egg."

Next day the term opened, and the three students were matriculated. Fred and Horace took out their course tickets, and Tennessee was entered as a graduate.

They devoted themselves closely to the lectures and quizzes; and each night found them in the dissecting room. Tennessee was soon known in college by his

sobriquet, and his rustic drollery made him a general favorite, though his rusticity frequently shocked the urbane gentility of the East.

One evening as Tennessee was wending his way to his boarding-house, he was accosted by a stranger:

"Will you help a poor laboring man?" said the stranger, with a professional beggarly whine, turning his face away, as if he had not courage to look at any one.

"Do what?" yelled Tennessee, at the top of his voice; for the noise of grinding wheels on Calamity Row almost deafened him.

"Help—a—poor—laborin' man," cried the stranger, elevating his voice until the professional beggarly whine was almost destroyed, yet keeping his face averted.

"Why, yes, where is he and what kind o' help does he want?" shouted the generous Tennesseean. At this moment the rushing of an elevated train was heard, Tennessee seized the beggar and dragged him to a safe place across the street.

"Where is the laborin' man?" he again asked pausing on the corner near Granny Gride's box.

"I am the laborin' man. Been at work here in the city, not been paid yet. I want two cents to get across the river," said the beggar with professional sadness.

"Is that all?" asked the Southerner.

"Yes."

"Well, here's two bits—take it and git some supper for yer folks."

"Oh, thank you—thank you," cried the laboring man, with many bows, still keeping his eyes on the pavement.

"Never mind that, I don't keer about two bits; I allers like to help the pore if they are worthy."

Tennessee went home, and at dinner related how he had met a "pore laboring man," from Brooklyn, who wanted money to cross the river.

"But, sir, you didn't accommodate him—ah—did you?" asked Mr. Van Orden.

"Why, of course. I gave him two bits."

"Oh, my gad, what a sucker!" ejaculated Mr. Van Orden.

"What a hass," added Sir Humphrey Harrison.

"That don't mean a dewd, does it?" asked Tennessee, with provoking coolness, as he filled his mouth fuller than strict table etiquette permits.

"Ah—sir?" cried Mr. Van Orden, clapping an eye-glass to his eye and gazing fiercely at the cool Tennesseean. "Do you mean that as a slur, sir—ah—what do you mean—ah? Explain yourself, sir!"

"Yes, sir, if you mean any hinsinuation on me, Hi shall resent the hinsult," put in the cockney, with fierceness.

"I don't exactly know what you mean," said Tennessee, chewing voraciously; "but ef ye mean yer sorry British blood's got riled, I kin cool it down fur ye, as our grandfathers did at Bunker Hill."

"W'at do you mean, sir, by Bunker 'ill? W'ats that got to do with your being a hass?" cried the unterrified Englishman.

"Oh—I jest mention it cos' it was thar Johnny Bull first learned how hard the American donkey could kick. Ef yer great-grandfather hasn't told ye, I can soon convince ye its 'nough to make one sick."

Mrs. Billington entered at that moment, and by her ready skill and tact speedily restored peace among her guests. The good-natured Tennesseean forgave the irate Englishman, who had no desire to learn anything about the American donkey.

A few days later, Tennessee was met on the street by a laboring man very much resembling the former, who mumbled out something he could not understand, especially as his face was averted.

"Well, what d'ye want?" he asked.

"If you please, sir!" he began in a very humble whine averting his habitually sad face, "I am only a poor laborin' man. I live in Brooklyn, and haven't money enough to cross the river. I never asked this before; I'm not a beggar, but I'm in such distress—" and he almost broke down.

"Sartinly, sir, sartinly," said the Southerner. "I don't object to helpin' a man who wants to go home. Thar's two bits; I reckin that'll take you, an' git supper besides."

"Oh, thank you, sir,—thank you,—may you never,"—but at this moment an elevated train thundered above, and Tennessee, who was standing beneath the trestle-work, fled before the parting blessing was completed. The laboring man crossed to the other side of Calamity Row, and was wandering along, when he suddenly came face to face with a pair of ill-favored rascals.

"Helloa, Duno, what racket are you on now?" asked a bold-faced man with short, grizzled beard. The two men were of that class known as "dock-rats." Each had a basket on his arm, in which were fishing-lines, small fish and eels. The laboring man said:

"I've been pickin' up a few pennies as an honest laborin' man."

"Made it pay?" asked the first speaker, while his less loquacious companion smoked a black pipe in silence.

"Yes, in a small way," Duno answered, his eyes on the curbstone.

"You're a coward, Duno. Why don't ye do somethin' big, and get your name in the papers."

"Yes, an' be strung up or sent to the Island! No, no; I warned you and Pike, but you seem to have heads o' yer own. Burke, you'll be sorry some day you didn't take my advice."

"We're only honest fishermen, ye know. They call us dock-rats; but for all that, it's better than hangin' round on the laborin' man's penny-lay. We've never been to the Island yit; have you?" asked Burke.

The laboring man started, and glanced uneasily about him. "There's a cop watchin' us," he said in a whisper. "We'd better move on."

They walked down the street, turned a corner, and were soon out of sight of the policeman. When they were out of sight, Burke, who was the spokesman of the wharf-rats, asked:

"Andy Duno, can you read?"

"Yes," the laboring-man answered.

"Read writin'?"

"Yes."

"Well we may strike somethin' rich soon. I don't know for certain; but we may. It's not dangerous, and then there is big pay in it."

"D'ye want me to help?" Duno asked eagerly.

"We may," answered Burke; "we'll want some 'un as can read writin'."

"I can—I'm a good reader," said Duno, greedily,—"when ye want me let me know. I'll be about Calamity Row watching for my southern greeny—"

At this moment the policeman came round the corner twirling his billy about in his hand, and the three evil-looking characters slipped away in different directions.

Nearly a week passed, when Tennessee was a third time accosted by a laboring man who had a family across the river, whom he was very anxious to reach that evening. Tennessee gave him all the small change he had about his person, and with many thanks, the laboring man hastened away.

"I may be a fool fur doin' it," said the Southerner, "but if I give with a good intention, I'm doin' good."

He was strongly impressed that the three laboring men were one, and he began to have vague suspicions that he was being made a victim. Three days later, he was returning from college, when, as he entered Calamity Row *en route* for the more quiet street on which Mrs. Billington's boarding-house stood, a familiar figure stepped before him, and accosted him with,—

"Mister, can you do a favor to a poor laborin' man? I live across the river in Brooklyn, and came over to find work. I failed to get it, and want to go back home to-night, but haven't money to pay my ferriage."

"See here, stranger!" said Tennessee. "It seems to me that I've paid your way across that river about often enough. Ef I ain't mistaken I've given you money enough in the last six weeks, to pay you across that river six dozen times. I don't care whether you are a laborin' man or not, but ef you come across me agin, I'll give you a dog-goned good lickin', perlice or no perlice. Now that's the wood with the bark on't."

The laboring man cast a glance at the square-shouldered rustic from the wilds of the Cumberland. He read that his game had failed, and with a half-whined apology, turned about and hurried away.

CHAPTER VII.

A ROMANTIC ADVENTURE.

TWILIGHT came early in Calamity Row. The rays of the sun on dark days failed to chase night's shadows from beneath those giant trestle-works. The houses were tall, and the smoke from adjoining factories and the river seemed to have settled like a pall in the dark

street. There was no uniformity of repulsiveness in the look of the buildings. Some were much taller than others, some darker; and all had a sooty appearance. They showed thriftlessness in the dirty windows and loose-hanging shutters.

Fred Saunders, and that singular character whom we have dubbed "Tennessee," were returning by the way of Calamity Row. Tennessee had given no more money to "laboring men," anxious to go to Brooklyn. He might be deceived by some other beggar or swindler, but they could never "come the laboring man dodge" on him again.

The night was hastened by the dark clouds which hovered over the city. A car halted to allow some passengers to get off, and as the horses tugged and strained to start, their steel-toed shoes struck out from the cobble-stones a shower of sparks, which flashed angrily in the dark street.

"Pore hosses," said Tennessee, whose heart was touched at the indication of suffering of either man or beast. "It don't take long to kill a hoss, workin' him to them kears."

"I suppose not," said Fred.

"They work a sorry lot to street kears. The country has to keep the city supplied with hosses, just like it does with people."

"Of course," said Fred.

"It's cruel to bring them pore critters from the country, where they've been used to green pastures and soft earth to walk on, and shady trees to lie under, to this mean town, where their feet never touch anything softer'n a cobble-stone. Not one hoss in a hundred what comes here will ever git out o' the city alive. They may hev dreams o' quiet pastures so green, with cool shades

an' clear, runnin' springs o' water, but they'll never see 'em agin."

Fred, at this moment, saw a fairy-like creature crossing the street. It was only a young shop-girl, but her faultless figure and graceful carriage at once attracted his attention. She tripped lightly along to the crossing, heedless of the crashing roar of the train overhead, which made Tennessee nervous. Street-cars and other vehicles were thick at the crossing, and the young shop-girl frequently paused to wait for an opening. At times the street was blocked, and then the oaths of teamsters, cracking of whips, and grinding roar of wheels, would have appalled one less accustomed to such scenes.

She continued her way without getting confused or alarmed. There was no policeman at the crossing, as there were on more fashionable, and less crowded, thoroughfares, to curb the fiery zeal of teamsters. Suddenly above the wild confusion came a warning cry. There was a surging, rushing sound, a crash of collision, and then a roar of wheels. More shouts of alarm—and further down the street could be seen a huckster's horse, without a driver, dashing furiously through the crowded mass, dragging a wagon after him. Teamsters shouted, and snapped their whips at the frightened animal to stop him ; but finding it all in vain, pulled up out of his way. With a tremendous crash the wheel of the huckster's wagon ran against some other vehicle, and for an instant the runaway was checked. But it tore loose, and again horse and wagon plunged forward. It struck again, and again freeing itself, thundered on.

From the first cry of alarm, Fred Saunders fixed his eyes on the shop-girl, who, with her bundle, was only half-way across. Everybody realized that a crisis was at hand and no one more than the frightened shop-girl.

"God have mercy on her!" gasped Fred, holding his breath. A human being was struggling for life, and he powerless to aid her. One moment she seemed almost out of danger. There was an opening. She started for safety, but at that instant a frightened teamster, intent only on saving his miserable old cart, lashed his horse between her and the sidewalk. The efforts to stop the infuriated horse by beating him over the head, drove him to frenzy. Inspired by the terror of a panic, he leaped and plunged madly. Fred and his companions were speechless with terror for the poor girl. Now she is safe again—now she is undoubtedly lost. On, leaping and plunging, like some monster struggling through a raging sea, comes the runaway horse.

"Tennessee!" cried Fred, "she will be crushed to death."

But the rustic doctor from the Cumberlands, who was afraid of elevated trains, had no fear of horses. Quickly drawing off his coat he laid it across the letter-box on the lamp-post, and, with remarkable coolness, said:

"Not while I'm able to ketch a hoss. I've held two bigger'n that."

At this moment she ran through the opening. But, like a monster determined on her destruction, the horse burst through the circle of vehicles surrounding it, and bore down on her. His eyes were madly glaring, his teeth gleamed from the parted lips, and fire-sparks dashed from the flying hoofs. It was time for instantaneous action. Two forms sprang from the sidewalk into that whirlpool in the street.

"Save the gal, and I'll stop the hoss!" yelled Tennessee, in a voice like the ring of a trumpet. The doctor leaped at the animal's head, seized him by the bit, and hurled him back on his haunches, amid a clatter of hoofs

and shower of sparks. At the same moment, Fred Saunders caught the girl in his arms, but not quickly enough to prevent the wagon wheel striking her on the shoulder. With a shriek of pain and terror she swooned.

Fred Saunders carried the insensible girl to the curb-stone, and paused near a lamp-post until she should recover. A policeman came up, brandishing his club, and threatening somebody with violence. The owner of the runaway slipped through the crowd, took his team, and drove away.

"Are you the owner of that horse?" he asked, walking up to Tennessee.

"No; I've got a dog-gone sight better hoss, down in Tennessee."

"Where is the owner?" asked the officer.

"I don't know; he went skulkin' away with his hoss an' wagin, about the time you came up."

"What are you doing here, anyway?" demanded the policeman fiercely.

"Nothin', only stoppin' that runaway hoss, you city fellers was afeared to tackle."

The policeman cleared the crossing of vehicles, and then looking about, saw Fred Saunders holding the insensible girl in his arms.

"Is she hurt?" he asked, advancing toward them.

"I think not badly—she has swooned," Fred answered, gazing into the pale sweet face.

"Is she an acquaintance or relation of yours?"

"No; I never saw her until a moment ago, when I ran in to drag her from beneath the wagon wheels."

"I'll get an ambulance and take her to the station," said the policeman.

"Who?" asked Tennessee.

"The girl."

"No you won't. You're not gwine to take a pore gal to the calaboose, jest bekase on account o' your keerlessness she gits run over an' killed, or knocked senseless."

"Is she anything to you?" asked the policeman haughtily.

"No.

"Then, sir, mind your own business."

"If you'd a minded yours, this wouldn't 'a happened." quickly retorted Tennessee.

The policeman would very much have liked to cudgel the Southerner, but he turned his attention to Fred, as likely to prove the most reasonable.

"I think, sir, the young lady ought to be taken to the hospital, where her injuries can receive immediate attention," he said.

"Wait a moment, she is recovering," Fred answered. His fair charge began to show signs of returning consciousness. The eyelids trembled and opened. Fred saw only a pair of large blue eyes looking out from a profusion of golden curls, tangled and disordered by the accident. In a moment she recovered herself, and assuring her rescuer she could stand, he trusted her weight to her feet, yet keeping an arm about her waist, as if reluctant to give her up.

The injured girl assured all that she was not seriously injured, and was ready to walk home.

"Will you accompany her?" the officer asked of Fred, who still remained at her side.

"Yes, with the young lady's permission," was the quick response. "What is your street?"

She answered, "Calamity Row." Fred started. Could it be possible, a being so fair and pure as she lived on Calamity Row?

The young woman was still dizzy, and clung to the arm

of her rescuer, as they walked along the crowded pavement. Tennessee went before, clearing the way.

"What is your name?" Fred asked.

"*Allie Gray*," was the answer.

"Where were you going?"

"To take a bundle of goods to the purchaser.

"You are——?"

"Mrs. Joyce's shop-girl," was the answer. He asked a few more questions, as to the extent of her injuries, which she assured him were trifles. The door of Mrs. Joyce's shop was reached. There, with many thanks, Allie bade him adieu. The walk to Mrs. Billington's was silent.

Fred could not say that his new acquaintance was a dazzling beauty, though he thought her very pretty, He remembered only a pair of great blue eyes looking at him from out a mass of tangled ringlets. Their softness and beauty seemed to enter his heart, and permeate every fiber of his body.

The adventure was an ordinary one, after all; yet that sweet, pale face, and the lovely blue eyes, had made a deep impression on Fred Saunders, which only deepened with time.

Allie Gray! Who was she, and why should she make such impression on this ambitious youth, who had turned away from the smiles of the fairest belles of the Western cities?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WOODEN-LEGGED SAILOR.

Not far from the street that we have called Calamity Row, we find a dock extending far out into East River. It is the longest dock on the New York side, and ships of considerable size lie up at this wharf. The docks on the day to which we call the reader's special attention, present a lively scene. On the left, nearest the shore, is a coal barge unloading. On the opposite side of the dock lies a schooner discharging a cargo of wood into carts ranged along the side to receive it. Men and large boys, in their shirt-sleeves, are busy pitching the wood from the schooner's deck to the edge of the wharf, and from the wharf to the carts. Farther down, on either side of the pier, lie schooners, barges, sloops, lighters, and two or three great ships unloading their cargoes, presenting a varied and animated scene, full of life, incident and energy; it is a scene on which the eye does not soon tire of gazing.

Tennessee, who had strolled down to the dock on this pleasant Saturday afternoon for a breath of fresh air, paused for a few moments and gazed about in happy bewilderment. The vessels, the forest of masts, the cries of the sailors, the shouts of officers, the sharp whistle of pipes, the creaking of cordage; all these were fresh and new to him. Across the river was Brooklyn, with its thousands of tall brick houses, slate roofs, and glittering spires, looking like some fairy city in the distance. The great bridge which unites the two cities is so high that

it seemed painted on the sky. Up the river, half concealed in a pale-blue mist, like some brilliant painting seen through a gauzy canvas, was Blackwells Island, its tall public buildings forming a bright background to the picture. The shining harbor with its sparkling waves and thousand vessels made up the foreground.

"This is the purtiest sight I've seen yit," said Tennessee, walking down the wharf toward its head, where a group of those nondescript personages called "wharf-rats" were engaged in fishing.

"Fishin', eh?" said Tennessee, approaching an ill-looking fellow, whose dirty, bloated hand held a line.

"Yes," growled the angler sullenly.

"Purty good luck?"

"Naw!—luck nothin': got two bites to-day,—one dog-fish an' t'other a mud-eel," growled the fellow savagely, turning his evil-disposed face toward his interlocutor. Calamity Row was represented at the dock: Jake and some of his companions were there.

"Hope I die, b'ys, ef there ain't the feller what was suckin' eggs on the street," Jake whispered to his companions at sight of Tennessee.

"Guess he'll not make much o' Pyke," Jake added, nodding toward Tennessee.

"Naw, ye bet he won't. Pyke's a brick, he is, an' ef he's on a lay, it's a deep un. He's not like Andy Duno, all'us hangin' round to beg a penny from some greeny."

"Andy's a rascal, an' so's Burke and Pyke. They'll all fetch up in Sing Sing or be hung," said Jake, putting a fresh bait on his hook, and tossing it into the water.

"She's a big one, ain't she?" said Tennessee, pausing at the stern of a large topsail schooner, which lay at the end of the dock. Tennessee's eyes were turned toward the tall tapering masts. "She's a whopper, I tell ye."

If he addressed any one, it was a seedy-looking fellow, who grew uneasy at the proximity of the broad-shouldered doctor, and edged away as if he feared the giant from the Cumberlands might pitch him off the dock. He turned about uneasily when Tennessee caught sight of his features. The doctor started, and for a moment was confused, then with an amused smile on his face, he stepped forward, and laying his hand on the seedy man's shoulder, said:

"Say, feller, ain't ye got across the river yet?"

"What d'ye mean?" growled the seedy man, trying to fix his cowardly eyes on the Southerner.

"I mean what I say. I axed ye ef ye hadn't got across the river. I've given ye money enough to cross fifty times, an here ye ar' agin."

"You're mistaken," growled Duno, turning to go.

"No, I ain't; I know a hawk from a dove, and a skunk from a hare."

"You're mistaken, sor. Let me go, or I will call the police."

"Just as soon you'd call 'em as not. It don't make no difference to me. I ain't a whinin', crawlin', contemptible, low beggar and thief, goin' about stealin' all the ginerosity from people's hearts, so's they don't know rale charity when they see it. No, I never done any o' them things; and now, ef ye want to call the perlice, do it!"

The fellow slunk away into the crowd of wharf or dock-rats which had gathered about them.

"Burke!" said Duno, on joining his acquaintance, at the other side of the dock, "that feller from the South who has been taken in so often on the laborin' man's lay, has tumbled to the racket, and's about to chuck me in the river."

"You ain't in no danger, fool. Besides, you've never helped us, an' I 'spect ye'd 'bout as soon give us up to the perlice as not."

"No, no, Burke; ye know I told you I'd help in that affair o' yours. I can read, ye know."

"Hush, fool, or some one will be sure to hear ye; a cop's comin' down the dock."

Burke and Pyke resumed their sullen attention to their floats. The policeman sauntered down the dock, and seeing all quiet, turned about, and stalked away.

Tennessee's attention was now directed to a coal-sloop, coming into the dock. A small tug was urging it to the shore. No one was visible on the sloop, save a wooden-legged sailor, whose grimy face was so black as to make even his race doubtful. But there was a cheerfulness in his manner which more than offset the coal-black on his face. Tennessee was an amused observer. Occasionally the sailor turned to shout "port," or "starboard" to the man at the wheel or to the pilot of the tug.

"Now she rounds beautifully—beautifully," cried the sailor. "There, port a little, steady—steady."

"Wonder what all that means and who he's talkin' to, or is he jest talkin' to the crowd," said Tennessee to himself.

"Hello, shipmate, will ye take a line for me?" asked the wooden-legged sailor, of Burke, as he held the line ready to toss. The dock-rat stood sullen and silent. "Will ye take a line fur a messmate?"

"I ain't no wharf-master," growled Burke.

"But maybe ye'll accommodate a shipmate."

"I 'tend to my own business," growled Burke, sullenly.

"Well, shiver my timbers!" cried the sailor, "ef you ain't the most selfish set o' landlubbers that ever came

athwart my weather beam. D'ye think ye kin always sail without askin' a favor? Sometime in the voyage o' life ye'll find some one as stubborn as you are, and then jest think of poor Jack. Will no one here take a line for me?"

"I'll do it," shouted a voice as hearty and good-natured as the sailor's. "Throw yer rope out here and I'll tie her up if I kin. I don't make it a rule to 'tend other people's business, unless they ax me, but them chaps there's got somethin' the matter with 'em to-day." Tennessee braced himself and stood ready.

"A messmate after my own heart. Steady, friend—here she comes."

With a graceful swing, the sailor sent the line whizzing through the air, and it fell at the feet of Tennessee. He stooped and picked it up.

"Where'll I tie it?" he asked.

"Take a turn round that post to break the headway," said the sailor, "and then move on up to the next, and then the next, and next, until you warp her into the dock."

"Oh yes, stranger, I understand," said Tennessee. "I've hitched many a mule to a sapling that way."

The rope was much larger and more inconvenient to handle than a mule rope. It was no light load to carry so many feet of towline, and when he reached the great post he made several ineffectual attempts to make it fast. The sailor, seeing he was doing his best, was too good-natured to criticise him.

"Take it to the next," said Jack. "Mebbe ye kin get a turn on it. Be quick, messmate, the current's strong, and the bow is beginnin' to sheer a leetle."

The nautical language was not so clear to Tennessee as it would have been to an old salt, but he understood sufficient to carry the cable at a run to the next post.

"Say, boss, le' me help ye give it a turn," said a boy at his side.

"All right, youngster, ef ye know more about it'n I do, ye kin take the lead."

The lad was Jake, of Calamity Row. Jake's knowledge was, beyond a doubt, superior to Tennessee's; for he took the heavy line and slipped the loop over the mooring-post, without the least difficulty.

"Wall now, I declare, ye ar' a smart boy," said Tennessee. "Ye know a blamed sight more about it'n I do."

"Ye'r kinder green yit, boss," said Jake, "I'm a reg'lar old salt, I am. I've laid about these docks an' helped warp in many a ship."

"Are you a sailor?"

"Well, boss, not exactly that; but the very next thing to it."

As the coal sloop was rounded to and brought in, Tennessee looked about for the three men who had refused to take the sailor's line; but they were nowhere to be seen.

"I say, boy, d'ye know who them three fellers ar', that wouldn't take the rope an' help in with the ship?" he asked of Jake, who stood by his side.

"Yes, they are Burke, Pyke, an' Duno. Andy Duno stands round on the corners, beggin' fur a few pennies a day to git across the river. The other two don't do nothin' but fish, but they are suspected o' bein' reg'lar thieves."

"Oh, I understand now," said Tennessee. "Do you know that feller on the boat?"

"Yes, nearly everybody 'bout here knows old Jack Bolin. He's the best salt that comes to this port. He gives away all he makes."

The sloop having been made fast, the tug cast off, headed down stream, and went puffing away, while old Jack Bo-

lin, with wonderful activity, considering his wooden leg, leaped from the deck of the sloop to the dock.

"Messmate," he said, seizing Tennessee's hand, and shaking it warmly, "you've got a heart as big as any Jack-tar afloat, ef ye can't belay a line. Now, when the wharfinger comes and receives my sloop, I'll take you'n the kid up to the saloon and stand treat."

Tennessee was strictly temperate, and excusing himself, walked up the street to his boarding-house.

CHAPTER IX.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

NIGHT again, and the great city all ablaze with light. The street-lamps and shop windows of Calamity Row give it a partial light, but there are so many shadows in the street—as there are over the hearts of the miserable inhabitants—that it never seems bright and cheerful. The people who hurry about this street have a strange unrest—an unnatural weariness. The children while engaged in sport, have a wild, worn look in their merriment, a haggard expression, seen even through the dirt on their grimy faces. Their sports and plays are mockeries. Their laughter is wild and mad, more like despair than merriment. They look like little old men and women, whose sinews and flesh have hardened with their consciences. They tire in this mad race, but cannot stop. There is no stop save death. Even Jake, whose bent for mischief, and whose incongruous dress gave him a clownish appearance, seemed to enjoy only a mad, miserable pleasure. Those barefooted boys and girls playing on Calamity Row really knew little of childhood happiness.

Jake was sauntering down the miserably dark street when he espied their old enemy, the Italian. He sounded a shrill whistle, which brought a dozen comrades about him in a very short time.

"There's that rag-picker, b'ys," he said in a cautious tone, fearing he would frighten him, before they had an opportunity of administering the punishment he deserved. "Now gather up stuns—all git stuns, and fire 'em at him."

The urchins needed no second bidding, and began to explore the dirty gutter with their fingers, for pebbles and small stones. The rag-picker was pursuing his humble avocation, nor dreamed of a hostile foe. He was bending over a barrel of ashes, gouging his hook into it, when "whiz," came a stone near his head striking the pavement a rod beyond. As he started up with a frightened air, another hit the pack on his back. The tormentors were in ambush behind boxes, iron pillars, cellar doors, and dirty stoops, from which they poured in a constant fire on the rag-picker. To contend with an invisible foe was folly, and he beat a retreat at once. His line of retreat was again near Granny Gride's stall, and for a moment she was in great trepidation concerning the welfare of her stock of goods. But they safely passed her, and the boys with deafening shouts pursued the Italian up the street. The Italian darted across the net work of steel rails which covered the crossing, and turned a corner in the wild hope of escaping. As he did so he passed an old wooden-legged sailor.

"Ho, ye lads! tack ship, or I'll be into yer weather bows," he shouted, as two or three of the most impetuous imps dashed against him. "Lay to,—lay to there, men o' war. D'ye know what sloop ye're chasin?"

"Le' me go," shouted one whom he had seized by the dirty coat-collar.

"If ye'll 'bout ship and scud before the wind, ye little land-shark, ye kin go; but if ye run about my game leg, why, shiver my timbers if I don't lash ye to my knee; and make a cat-o'nine out o' my open hand!"

It was bad policy for any one who wished to travel peaceably about Calamity Row to arouse the boys. They surrounded the old sailor, and began pelting him with pebbles and mud. Jake recognizing Jack Bolin as an old friend, refused to have anything to do with the punishment. He even tried to keep the others off.

"Let 'em alone,—they 'll be sick o' this breeze afore the storm's over," said the sailor, squirting some tobacco-juice in the eyes of one, which sent him howling down the street. "There's a good supply o' ammunition aboard, jest come on," laughed Jack. A moment later he let fly in the eyes of two more, and they went roaring away into the darkness. The old tar soon put the war-like urchins to flight.

"Jack, I didn't hev nothin' to do with it," said Jake, coming forward and offering to help rub the mud off the sailor's cap, jacket, and trousers.

"I know ye didn't, lad! No harm's done. They'll see clearer when their eyes quit hurtin'. Why war the boobies chasin' the rag-picker as if he war a pirate?"

"Well, boss, I'll tell ye what he done. We were playin' in the street, an' a little b'y was runnin' around a corner. He didn't see the rag-picker until he run right agin him. The rag-picker slapped the little feller until it made him sick. Then we got stuns and drove him off. We drive him off every time he comes round."

"Don't the police ever overhaul ye?"

"Naw!" answered Jake.

By Jake's aid the mud was pretty well cleaned off his clothes, and Jack stamped away, shaking his shaggy head and muttering some incoherent sentences.

Old Jack Bolin had no special object in walking about Calamity Row, unless it was to note the changes of thirty years. Thirty years ago he sailed from New York, on his first voyage, young and full of vigor. Though he had frequently returned, his home had been on the wave ever since. Thirty years had made a change both in Calamity Row and the sailor. It was not improved in cleanliness, while in noise and crowded buildings, the increase had been wonderful. The old man was leisurely passing the queer little box-like shop of Granny Gride. In the dark background of the interior, looking very much as if she had been painted there,—she sat so still and motionless,—was the old woman. The white lace cap-border outlined and made more prominent her dark, wrinkled face. Jack glanced twice at her withered figure; he walked up to her stall, and with his hands on the counter, poked his head into her queer little house. She was peeling the shells from some nuts, and had not noticed him. Jack's breathing first warned her of his presence, then she raised her head with a frightened scowl.

The sailor met the eyes of the old fruit-vender and he started back with an incoherent exclamation. Granny Gride did not scream or swoon. Poverty and suffering had seared her nerves. She could only scowl at him with her dim, weak eyes, her astonishment greater than her fear. After a moment of surprise Jack placed his hand on his head, and said:

"Yes, my top riggin 's all right, and may I never take another cruise ef I'm mistaken. It is—yes, it is Nancy Gride."

"Who are you?" asked the old woman, whose imperfect vision did not reveal his features.

"Don't you know me, Nancy Gride? Don't ye remember Jack Bolin?" and he leaned over into her gloomy

little shop. The wrinkled face grew paler, and those weak eyes opened in surprise, as she stammered,

"Y-e-s, I know Jack Bolin; but you ain't he?"

"Yes, I am, Nancy Gride, and I've cruised all round this city a thousand times, the last sixteen years, hopin' to come across you; but ye've always been out o' port. Was ye tryin' to slip the cable and keep out o' my way?"

"No."

The answer was sharp as it was short, and yet there was intense uneasiness in the old woman's manner.

"Nancy Gride," said the old sailor, and his grimy face grew serious, "ten thousand things hev happened since that awful night. I seem to hev lived a thousand lives and died a thousand deaths. I sailed all over the world, and tried in every port to find you, but couldn't. Where hev ye been?"

"In New York."

"Didn't ye see the advertisement I put in the papers fur ye?"

"No."

"You war jest as much buried here as if you had been at the bottom o' the sea. But now that I've found ye, Nancy," he added, in a faltering voice, "tell me what became o' the child?—the poor little baby?"

The look of uneasiness in the old woman's face culminated in a shudder; she groaned, and was speechless.

"Nance, Nancy Gride, haven't ye no ballast o' human feelin' left in that old hulk o' yourn? Tell me where the babe can be found?" demanded Jack Bolin, with increased earnestness. She fixed her bleared old eyes on him a moment and said:

"I swear I don't know."

There was a look so fierce in that coal-begrimed face,

that the old woman uttered a little scream. One brawny arm was thrust into the dark little box, and the old sailor, clutching her shoulder, said:

"Lay to, broadside, Nance, and tell me all about it, or, shiver my timbers ef I don't damage yer weather bows, so's to make yours a short cruise!"

"Oh Jack, Jack, don't!" she gasped. "Jack, you wouldn't kill a poor old body like me!"

"Lay to and speak quick; where's the baby?" he demanded.

"Take yer hands from me, and I'll tell yer," she gasped. He did so. Passion was so foreign to Jack Bolin's nature, that he was shocked at himself when he found how near he had come to being violent toward a helpless old woman. After a few gasps the old woman said:

"Ye know, Jack, on that night when ye brought the kid to me;—it was a long while ago, Jack."

"Yes, 'bout sixteen years; but heave ahead, and sail by the compass."

"Well, ye know I was very poor, Jack," whined the old woman, with the corner of her apron to her bleared, weak eyes.

"I know ye was, but I told ye I would come for the baby; for you to keep it for me, and I'd pay ye well."

"So ye did, but ye know, Jack, that was an awful night. So many people got drowned, and I didn't hear from you for so long, that I supposed you were dead—that you drowned in going back."

"I wasn't drowned, I was run down by a tug and had both my legs smashed; one so badly that it had to be cut off. My ribs and skull were broke, and I lay in the hospital so long, a'most dead, that I forgot everything. Soon as I was able to hobble about, I set out to find you—but what did ye do with the baby?"

"Don't look so, Jack—ye frighten me."

"Ye needn't be afraid, Nancy," said Jack, sadly. "It's gone now. I wouldn't hurt a poor old soul like you, even though ye deserve it. Where's the baby?"

"I couldn't find you, an' I was sich a poor old body,—so poor I warn't able to take keer o' myself, much less a child,—and the papers said you were drowned, so I took the child to the Orphans' Home."

"Did ye leave it there?"

"Yes, but it ain't there now."

"Who got it?"

"I don't know."

"Old woman," said Jack, his sad, earnest eyes beaming with pity and sorrow. "You've not only done the meanest thing ever done by woman, but maybe lost a fortune."

Granny Gride's dim eyes brightened a moment, and her face became half expectant. The old sailor, noticing the change in her face, continued. "Did you never go to see about the child? May be it's there!"

"No, it ain't. After you advertised, I went to the Orphans' Home to see about it. Some one had taken the baby out. There had been a fire, and the books o' the establishment were burned or stolen, so it would be impossible to find out who got the baby."

"You said a moment ago that you didn't see my advertisement."

"Yes, Jack, I told ye a lie a minute ago, but now I'll tell ye the truth. I did see the advertisement in the papers; but it was several years after I thought ye dead. I knowed that I ought to ha' kept the child, but it had been gone."

"Nancy Gride, you are a fool. Why didn't ye advertise the baby? If it had any relations left, they'd ha' paid

ye more'n ye could make in a life-time sellin' bad apples and spoiled candy."

"'Twarn't no use," said Nancy, shaking her head. "There war so many children picked up who hadn't parents, that ye never could ha' found one for this."

"Well!" sighed old Jack, "when ye go to Davy Jones's locker, which won't be long, fer yer voyage is about over, the ghost o' the poor little baby will rise up, and not let ye enter the port o' final rest. We're both nearin' that great port, where we'll hev to cast anchor forever, and if you kin be contented with that on yer soul, it's more'n I kin do. That child shall be found if livin'; if dead, it shall have a monument, though it has no name to put on it."

The disappointed hopes of years were too much for the old sailor. His tender heart was stirred to its depths, and he walked down the street, brushing the moisture from his weather-beaten eyes.

CHAPTER X.

RESCUER AND RESCUED.

FRED SAUNDERS could not banish from his memory those soft blue eyes. Sleeping or waking, they haunted him with ceaseless persistence.

"Why could she not have been the daughter of a millionaire?" he asked himself, as he sat alone in his room, reflecting on the incident. "Then I could have fallen in love with her, and she with me, and had a grand romantic marriage in high life. But a Calamity Row shop-girl—bah!"

With a sigh, Fred tried to banish the subject from his

mind. How foolish of him to sigh. Perhaps he should never see her again. That evening as he went to the College, accompanied by Tennessee and Horace, they walked down Calamity Row, past the small shop of Mrs. Joyce. When opposite the shop, the garrulous Tennessee said:

"Thar's where Fred's gal lives."

"Who is she?" asked Horace, with a smile.

"Ain't ye heerd about his keepin' a gal from bein' run over the other day? He pitched right out into the street among wagins and kearts, jest as she fainted, toted her to the sidewalk, and sot down on an ash barrel with her on his lap until she came to, when he took her home. Thar's where she lives."

"Why, Fred," said Horace, "you have grown to be a Calamity Row hero. She's a shop-girl, eh? ha, ha, ha!"

Fred's face colored, and he bit his lip. His foolish heart beat wildly, but he was silent. When he returned from college that evening, he tried to avoid his companions, that he might, unobserved, linger about the door of Mrs. Joyce's shop, and catch a glimpse of the fairy-like creature within. That shop seemed a paradise in comparison to other parts of the street. Tennessee would persist in keeping at Fred's side, much to the annoyance of our student, and he was forced to pass the shop with only a cursory glance inside. Fred had worked himself up to such a pitch that he had determined, come what might, to see once more the beautiful being he had rescued. He would talk with her, and learn something of her past history.

"There may not be any romance about it," he said to himself, "but it will be a pleasure to learn something of a pretty girl."

There was no idea which he would have rejected so

quickly as that he could possibly be in love with Allie Gray. He could admire a pretty girl without being in love with her, and this interest was only admiration.

"Why, hang it," he said, "I have never even had a speaking acquaintance with her. I know nothing about her; but she must be ignorant, and on closer acquaintance I may find her unattractive, or repugnant."

If Fred thought this conclusion had put the pretty shop-girl out of his mind, he was mistaken. He lingered behind his chums next day, and allowed them to start home several minutes before he did. He was compelled to cross Calamity Row, in order to reach his boarding-house, but why did he linger on that corner, heedless of the thunder of aerial trains, the constant roar of vehicles, and shouts of teamsters? He had called himself a fool again and again, for thinking of the pretty shop-girl. He made up his mind to pass the shop and go on to his dinner, just as an inebriate has frequently resolved to pass by the place of his temptation. But when he reached the door, like the poor drunkard, he thought he would just look in. As Fred looked inside, he espied a green neck-scarf which he thought would suit him. Surely there was no harm in stepping inside and buying a neck-scarf. With his foolish heart beating wildly, he cast a furtive glance along the street, lifted the latch of the door, and entered the shop. He was at once struck with the neatness and order of everything. He was so embarrassed that he felt like a great, awkward school-boy.

"Why am I such a fool?" he asked himself. "I was never afraid of anyone before, and I don't see why I should tremble now." Allie was waiting on the only customer in the shop, a tall old woman who seemed very particular about her purchases. Mrs. Joyce was not in the shop, but her sewing machine could be heard from a

rear apartment. The tall old woman was hard to suit. The shop-girl patiently took down box after box, which she opened for her customer.

"I don't find what I want here," said the customer.

"I have shown you all the edging we have, madam," the shop-girl returned.

"Well, you haven't got much of a stock," answered the shrill-voiced woman. "Mr. Dempster said you kept a full line of French lace, and my husband, Mr. Sniffles, said I ought to patronize you; but I don't see what I want," and gathering up her skirts, Mrs. Sniffles swept toward the front door. She had almost reached it before she discovered a young man leaning carelessly against the show-case. She gave him a stare as she passed out, and muttered to herself: "He's come to flirt with her. Shop-girls are such hateful creatures."

Fred stood calmly observing the young girl put up the boxes she had taken down to gratify Mrs. Sniffles. She was very pretty in her neat shop-dress and snow-white apron. How could she remain so scrupulously clean engaged in this work? In spite of himself, Fred was dreaming little day-dreams in which the girl before him occupied a prominent place. So noiselessly had he entered, and so busily had she been engaged trying to please Mrs. Sniffles, that Allie had not discovered him yet.

At last, turning her eyes toward the door, she encountered the grave face of a young man, and started slightly, while her face flushed. Regaining her composure in a moment, with a modest but business-like air, she said:

"I beg pardon, sir; have I kept you waiting?"

"No, no,—Miss Gray, I believe," stammered Fred, in a most unreasonable flutter.

"Yes, sir,—what can I show you?" If she was agitated, she had schooled herself better than he.

"I think, Miss Gray," he said, beginning to gather his wits, "you must grow tired showing goods to customers who purchase so little."

"Oh, I don't mind that, sir; it is my business. What do you wish to purchase?" she asked.

"You can do up that green neck-scarf for me. I examined it while the old lady was looking at laces and edging she never intended to buy. How much is it worth?" The shop-girl, taking the cheap article from the display window, neatly wrapped it up, and laying it on the show-case at his elbow, said:

"The price is sixty-five cents." She stood on the opposite side of the counter, leaning as gracefully against it as if she had posed for a picture.

Fred counted out the money, and Allie put it in the drawer. "Why does he not go?" He is unable to tear himself away. "I hope, Miss Gray, you have not suffered from the fright you received the other evening?" he at last said.

"Oh, no, sir! I have been quite well since. I am very grateful to you, for had you not come to my aid, I am sure I should have been seriously injured, if not trampled to death."

"I am very glad I was there to help you. You must pardon me, Miss Gray, for taking some interest in one I so strangely met."

The girl's face paled and flushed alternately, her blue eyes drooped, and she began nervously to pinch up little folds in her apron. Fred hated himself for having spoken as he did. Some strange spell enchained him to the little shop. She leaned slightly against the counter, and with downcast eyes and agitated fingers, kept folding down foolish little plaits in her apron.

"I hope you do not think me presumptuous, Miss

Gray," he said coolly, "in expressing a natural desire to renew an acquaintance brought about under such circumstances."

"Oh, no, sir," Allie answered with downcast eyes, her nervous fingers still folding meaningless plaits. That silver voice and those drooping eyes were dangerous to Fred.

"I hope our acquaintance is not disagreeable to you?" he said, after a moment's silence.

"I should be ungrateful to say so. I owe my life to your daring."

"Don't attempt to make a hero of me, for I should make a poor one," said Fred. "I really do not deserve your praise. Though I caught you beneath the wagon, I was really in no danger myself."

"That could hardly be possible, where there were so many excited teamsters, and such a jam of vehicles. It was certainly dangerous."

"Yes, but not for me," Fred answered. My companion was the *cheval de bataille* on that occasion. He seized the horse by the bit and held him, while I rescued you with very little danger to myself. However, let us be thankful that you escaped unharmed."

"Who is your friend?"

"His name is D. C. Stonebeater. He is a simple-hearted man from the mountain wilds of Tennessee; honest, rude, intelligent, and good-natured," answered Fred, welcoming any theme which might excuse him for prolonging the interview.

"You strangely blend his traits," the shop-girl said.

"Why do you think his characteristics strangely blended?"

"You put rudeness and intelligence together."

"If you ever come to know Dr. Stonebeater, or 'Tenn-

essee,' as we call him, you will discover that I am correct. He is rude, with no social culture, and yet he is intelligent. He has excellent medical knowledge, is a historian, mathematician, understands the natural sciences, psychology, and almost everything save grammar and etiquette. These he seems to ignore.

"Why should he be rude, and at the same time scholarly?" Allie asked, her interest in Tennessee increasing to such an extent, that her unusual embarrassment vanished.

"He is the opposite of that class who affect extreme refinement."

His eyes met hers, and they dropped, while her nervous fingers began once more to fold down plaits in her apron. The conversation had seemingly come to an end. Why does he not go? Is he determined to wait until he has committed himself?

"You may place the rudeness and the eccentricities of Dr. Stonebeater on one side of the balance, and his kindness and unselfish devotion to his friends on the other, and the latter will outweigh his faults," he at last said.

Again Allie ventured to raise her head, and met his calm hazel eye fixed earnestly and steadfastly on her. There was, she felt, a truthfulness and honesty about him of which her life on Calamity Row had given her but few examples.

There was another lull in the conversation, and Fred grew nervous. He glanced from the shop windows and was astonished to see that it had grown quite dark.

"Excuse me, Miss Gray," he said, with some agitation, "I had no idea it was so late, I must be going."

He bowed and turned about to leave the shop, when she called his attention to the fact that he was leaving

his purchase behind him. She took it from the show-case and handed it to him.

"Oh, yes," he said, turning again toward her. "Thank you. I should have forgotten it." He put out his hand to take the parcel, and his fingers just touched those of the girl. An electric thrill seemed to permeate his entire system. Again the wild emotions of the heart crushed reason to the earth, and Fred Saunders was reckless. He dropped the parcel, and seizing Allie's trembling hand, began in a low voice full of passion.

"Pardon me, Miss Gray, if I seem rude; but I must see you again—I must know you better."

Her blue eyes dropped, and her face had paled and crimsoned by turns. His movements were so sudden that she was surprised if not frightened. For a moment he gazed in silence at the pretty bewildered face, and continued: "Promise me that I can call frequently —you must promise me! When you come to know me you will understand that this—I can not explain it now."

She was so confused, she hardly knew what she said. She realized that she had consented, and he was gone before she knew what answer to make. Bewildered, she stood at the counter, her large blue eyes gazing into vacancy.

"What did I say? What did he mean?"

"I am a fool," Fred mentally exclaimed the moment he was on the street. "No good can come of it. Heaven knows I would not harm her for the world." A marriage with a shop girl from Calamity Row would be an impossibility. His parents would never consent, nor could he, who had always doubted that goodness and purity could be indigenous to the metropolis, get his own consent to pluck a flower from that slough of vice, even though it was the fairest that ever bloomed. "She is good and

pretty," he said, as he hurried along, "but she can never be more to me than a pure, beautiful girl."

When he reached home, dinner had been over some time, but his accommodating landlady had a warm meal waiting for him. Fred had a poor appetite, and tempting as the dinner was, he ate but little. Going to his room he found Horace and Tennessee discussing his absence. Fred's flushed face at once proved their suspicions correct.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Horace, "so you called on your Calamity Row belle, eh?"

Fred's face flushed redder still, but knowing it would be foolish to fly in a passion, he said:

"Gold cannot be contaminated by association with baser metals, and a being can be so pure—there is one so pure—that a lifetime on Calamity Row cannot stain her character.

"Fred, are you in earnest?" asked Horace.

"I am." The answer was firm and solemn. Heart had achieved another triumph over brain.

"You were more radical than I, Fred, and you are first to abandon your philosophy. I am not ready to do so yet, and Calamity Row will certainly be excluded from my category of virtue."

"A category founded on ignorance can never become popular save with the founder."

"One founded on a crazy passion for a pretty girl is as far beyond reason," Horace replied warmly. Fred's cheek grew livid. Both young men were spirited and courageous, and it is difficult to tell how matters would have terminated, had not Tennessee howled out:

"Oh, boys—hush up!—hush up! Ov course yer both right. Thar's good 'n bad 'n all places; and we never ought to make up our minds 'bout people from the

clothes they wear or the houses they live in. Wait till ye know somethin' about their hearts, an' then ye kin judge. The poet says:

> Ye may notch it on the palin' as a mighty risky plan
> To put yer judgment on the clothes that kiver up a man;
> For I hardly need to tell ye how ye often come across
> A fifty dollar saddle on a twenty dollar hoss.' "

This brought a smile to the faces of our friends, and their threatened quarrel was averted. Having accomplished his object, the doctor tilted his chair back, elevated his feet to the center table, and locking his hands behind his head, launched out into the discussion of a disputed medical question.

CHAPTER XI.

TENNESSEE IN CHURCH.

FRED'S mother wrote letters of affection to him, charging him to remember to follow the Christian examples which had been set before him. Fred had always been noted as a steady youth, with spirit enough to make life enjoyable, yet with too much manhood to stoop to what young blood calls trivial pleasures.

Mrs. Saunders had the utmost confidence in the sterling worth of her son. She believed him strong enough to turn his back on temptation and tempters. She knew he was too brave to be induced by taunts and jeers, into sinful paths. Fred was a strong, brave young man. His was a character to be admired, even modeled after. He was not one of those brilliant men that set the world

ablaze with good or evil, but a sober, steady, quiet, unassuming youth, possessing the ambition to be ranked honest and virtuous, rather than great. When Fred came to New York, his mother, learning that there was a Methodist Church near Mrs. Billington's, and ascertaining the name of the pastor, got her own minister to write to him, in regard to her son. Her pastor did so, hoping the New York brother would call on him, and take interest in his spiritual welfare.

A few days after the events in our last chapter, Fred was astonished when Mrs. Billington announced a gentleman waiting in the parlor to see him.

"I will come up to his room, if he has no objection," said a pleasant voice, from the foot of the stairway.

"Tell him to come up, by all means," said the bewildered Fred.

Horace and Tennessee were in his room, but, knowing there could be nothing private in the visit, he asked them to remain. A few moments later Mrs. Billington ushered into the apartment a tall, fine-looking man with benevolent features, whose air and general appearance at once bore evidence that he belonged to the clergy. Leaving him to introduce himself and make known the object of his visit, Mrs. Billington tripped down the stairway, and disappearing in her boudoir, said:

"A preacher. *Chacun a son goût!*"

"You wish to see me, I believe!" said Fred, advancing a step.

"You are Mr. Saunders?"

"Yes, sir."

"Allow me to introduce myself,—I am William Dempster, pastor of the Fullman Methodist Church. I have a letter from your pastor, Brother Snow, in which he requested me to call on you, and form your acquaintance."

Fred introduced him to his companions, who greeted the minister heartily.

"This is an unlooked-for pleasure; I did not suppose New York ministers would care to look up strangers."

"I don't know why you should entertain such a thought," said Mr. Dempster. "We are fishers of men."

"Some on 'em use mighty poor bait," put in Tennessee, who, having seated himself after the introduction, had elevated his feet to a chair, and locked his hands behind his head.

"You are right, Mr. Stonebeater," said the minister impressed with the rude yet pointed response. "The trouble with many of our ministers is, they do not take the trouble to study the habits of the fish they try to catch."

The Rev. William Dempster wore no strait-jacket. He could even tell a story which, though pointed and amusing, had its *morale*. There was something about him which soon placed the young men quite at their ease in his presence. He laughed as heartily as they at good wholesome jokes or ludicrous blunders, and seemed more like a companion and friend, than any man they had met.

"Pardon me, gentlemen," said Mr. Dempster, rising after an hour spent in this pleasant manner. "I can stay no longer, enjoyable as this conversation is. I fear I am already trespassing on your time. I hope to see you all at church next Sabbath, and any time you may choose to come, will be pleased to have you at the parsonage."

"We shall avail ourselves of your kind invitation," said Fred. The good man, once more shaking the hand of each, departed.

"He's a jolly good feller," said Tennessee, as soon as the preacher was gone. "I don't allers like preachers. They're either too hide-bound to 'low their jints to bend,

or else cold as ice. But this un's a jolly good feller, and kin do a feller's soul more good wi' his jokes, than a hundred sermons dosed out by some dry old fogy."

The young men went next Sunday, to the little brown church round the corner.

As Fred, followed by his two companions, ascended the broad steps and entered the vestibule, a bald-headed usher came and led them up the aisle to a seat near the pulpit. Mr. Dempster had not yet entered. Mrs. Sniffles sat in the pew opposite our friends, and the moment Fred entered, recognized him as the young man she had seen in Mrs. Joyce's shop on Calamity Row. Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles and their three daughters, Mary, Gracey, and Dolly, occupied the same pew. The tall old woman fixed her sharp eyes on the young man, to let him understand that she knew him, and after his deigning to associate with Calamity Row shop-girls, he need not expect to be received in that select circle of society, of which she was a member.

The sermon was neither deep nor eloquent, but plain, and from the heart. Coming from the heart it never failed to reach the heart.

After dismissing the congregation Mr. Dempster came to our friends, and taking the hands of each, he expressed his pleasure at their presence, and hoped they would come again. Introducing Fred to Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles, he said :

"This is a young man from the great West, whose mother has placed him under our care, Brother and Sister Sniffles, and we must not neglect our duty."

"Oh yes—oh yes, Mr. Dempster, we will take care of him," said Mrs. Sniffles.

"Ya-as, we'll take care of him, Mr. Dempster," assented the plethoric Mr. Sniffles. It was curious to see

how quickly the manner of Mrs. Sniffles changed toward the youth. This was a young man from "the great West,"—perhaps a silver king, or cattle monarch. The very idea conveyed wealth and power, and she cast quick motherly glances at her three marriageable daughters, to see if their toilets were in good condition.

"You must be sure to call on us, Mr. Saunders," said Mrs. Sniffles, her head elevated. "Don't be at all formal, but just come right along; we are not formal folks."

"Ya-as, don't be formal; we're not formal," echoed the husband.

"You see, Mr. Saunders, we can't in this case make the first call,—but, it makes no difference, you know. Come on any way—give him our card with our number, Isaias; I know you have our card," said the anxious mother of the three marriageable daughters.

"Ya-as, I know I have a card," the husband answered, thrusting his thumb first into one pocket, and then in the other. Mrs. Sniffles, like a good general, knew that delay would be dangerous, and while her husband was fumbling for a card, she ranged her three daughters in line of battle, and began the attack by introducing him first to Miss Mary Sniffles, the oldest, a blonde with gray, expressionless eyes, light hair, and a nose which turned up at the end. Next came Miss Gracey, a young lady of uncertain age, with hair more red than yellow, and eyes of a pale blue. Last was Dolly the youngest, she was plump, had a short round face and blue eyes, and her age might range anywhere from sixteen to twenty. The girls were all stouter than the mother, being fashioned more after their father.

The mother still stood smiling on her array of daughters, when her husband found the card with their number.

"Have you got the card, Isaias?" asked Mrs. Sniffles in her sharp, shrill voice.

"Ya-as, I've got the card," he answered, holding it up to his wife, who took it eagerly, and handing it to Fred, continued:

"Now, Mr. Saunders, do come and see us. I do so much want to talk with some one from the West."

"Ya-as, we want to talk with some one from the West," said Mr. Sniffles. The youth assured the good people that it would be a pleasure to him. Mrs. Sniffles, determined to make his visit sure, asked him to fix a time.

Fred, in his bewilderment, cast embarrassed looks at the three marriageable daughters. Miss Mary, with folded arms looked as bewitching as it was possible for a plump little woman of twenty-eight to look. A faint flush suffused the cheeks of Miss Gracey, while the irrepressible Dolly giggled. Wednesday was agreed upon, and Mrs. Sniffles insisted on his calling early enough for dinner,—they dined at six,—and then, as if her work for the present was over, she filed out with her three marriageable daughters.

Fred allowed his companions to go ahead of him. They had paused in the vestibule, where he overtook them. Tennessee, with an "eye to fun," touched him on the shoulder, saying:

"Fred, which one o' them red-headed gals are ye struck on?"

"Hush, you will be overheard," Fred answered, blushing like a school-boy. The injunction was obeyed, and nothing more was said on the subject until they reached their room.

Their amusement and Fred's discomfiture would have been greatly increased had they heard the remarks of

Mrs. Sniffles to her tranquillized husband. "He's a fine young man, Isaias," she said, as they reached the sitting-room.

"Ya-as, a fine young man," echoed the rubicund Mr. Sniffles.

"From the West—the great boundless West," continued Mrs. Sniffles, in her sharp, shrill voice. "May be he's a silver king, or the owner o' millions in cattle—oh, he's rich!"

"Ya-as, he's rich," echoed Mr. Sniffles.

"And did you mark how he noticed Mary? I'm sure it's Mary this time."

"Ya-as, it's Mary this time," acquiesced Mr. Sniffles.

That night our three students went back to the church. Had Horace and Fred dreamed of the shame Tennessee's rudeness would bring on them, they would not have gone near the church. They found the same bald-headed usher to escort them to their pew. Horace and Tennessee were the last to enter one pew, which left the doctor from the Cumberlands sitting next to the aisle. There being no room for Fred in that pew, he occupied the one just behind them. Glancing around, he espied Mrs. Sniffles with her three daughters. The mother smiled and bowed, and then the three marriageable daughters bowed and smiled, and Mr. Sniffles, with an owl-like grin on his rubicund face, bobbed his head.

Fred glanced at a distant pew, and he started. Some people were just entering it. In that congregation he had seen sparkling jewels and scintillating diamonds, but none so bright or beautiful as the blue eyes which met his. Allie Gray, the shop-girl from Calamity Row, was one of the persons entering the pew. The others were Mrs. Joyce, old Joe Ruggles the cobbler, and his worthy spouse. This small party had been induced by

the persuasions of Mr. Dempster to attend church. The congregation was thrown into a little flutter at the appearance of strangers. The youth and beauty of Allie Gray attracted more attention than all the diamonds which flashed on the wealthiest belle. Her dress was very neat and simple, consisting of a delicate green tulle over satin, walking length, not very costly, and without ornaments, save plain gold bracelets. She wore a jaunty blue hat, with a white rose on the side. In her simple, neat attire, she was more beautiful than the banker's daughter opposite her. For a moment all eyes were on the new-comer, and among others, Mrs. Sniffles's.

The shriveled chin of Mrs. Sniffles trembled with rage, when she saw the wealthy young man from the West casting sly glances at the shop-girl. Mr. Dempster had launched out into a discourse. The little flutter of excitement subsided. A few moments later, Fred who was giving more attention to Allie Gray than to the pulpit, saw a broad smile suddenly appear on a man's face; then another, another, and another. The choristers were either tittering or making wry faces, and he heard Miss Dolly giggle outright. He began to wonder what had excited the mirth of the audience. Mr. Sniffles was imitating his wife's winks, nods, and gestures, and going through an astonishing pantomime. Fred came to the conclusion that the entire audience had lost their wits, when a smothered snort from Horace attracted his attention to the pew directly in front.

It was a sight to appall the boldest. Tennessee had sunk down in his seat, until his head rested against the back of the pew. He was reclining in an easy position, one broad foot resting on the back of the pew before him, and elevated above his head, completely concealed his face from the minister.

Fred was horrified, and, for a moment, knew not what to do. The eyes of the congregation were on his party. Horace, who only regarded Tennessee's rudeness as a ludicrous joke, now whispered something in his ear which caused the rustic physician to remove his enormous foot from the top of the pew.

"What in the world did you do that for?" Fred asked, when they were on their way home.

"Do what?" asked Tennessee, with childlike simplicity.

"Put your foot on the back of the pew."

"Oh, the preacher was callin' fur soles, an' I thought I'd throw one in sight," was Tennessee's laconic response. Horace roared, but Fred was too much shocked to join his merriment. The doctor, after a few moments' silence, dryly said: "I tell ye, boys, that was a mighty fine sermon, an' I took it all in. I was restin' mighty easy when ye told me to take my foot down."

Fred Saunders had almost made up his mind to cut the acquaintance of Tennessee, but when he remembered what a kind heart he had, and how brave he was in Allie's peril, he decided to forgive his rudeness.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STAR AND THE CRESCENT.

THE scene we now present to the reader is one scarcely known, save to the medical world. It is in that large room in the college building, where students, during the dark hours of the night, cut, dig and scrape away on lifeless bodies. Forty long, high tables are in the apart-

ment, with aisles between. The floor is uncarpeted, and save a few high stools and the tables, has little other furniture. A row of columns up the centre of the room, act as a support to the roof. At this late hour of the night the room is almost deserted by the living. Only two or three gas jets have been left burning, which seem to increase the somberness of the opposite corners, where the columns disappear in the darkness. On entering, one meets the awful odors of the charnel-house. Each long, high table supports a dead body, in various stages of decomposition. Some are mangled and torn as if vultures had been at them, and others are almost fleshless skeletons, with only a few ragged muscles left clinging to the arms and legs. Vultures have been at these dead bodies, but they are the beneficent spoilers of science, and the scalpel and dissecting knife have taken the place of the talons and beak. Upon one table lies the body of a young and once handsome woman; but, oh, how ghastly, how terrible in this state of decomposition! The eyes are open and glassy, and the under jaw has fallen. The long hair—bright golden tresses, which at one time might have been the envy of a score of belles—hangs down in wild profusion over the end of the table. Those wavy tresses have an appearance of dampness about them. On the top of the head the hair is quite mouldy, and one can see that the body has been taken from the water.

It is late, and the demonstrator and nearly all the students have quitted the college. Four ghoulish forms in gowns and caps, with scalpels in hand, are bending over a table next to that on which lies the young woman with long golden hair. All other bodies save this were covered; yet from beneath the cloth peeps here and there a grinning face, a skeleton hand, a glistening

joint, or lacerated foot. The sight is enough to freeze a timid person's blood. Among those ghoulish forms with glittering blades and pincers, cutting and pulling at the dead body before them, are our friends, Fred, Horace, and David C. Stonebeater. The fourth is a Doctor Morey, who, like Tennessee, has come to the college to review. Late as it is, they still continue their work. Tennessee is ready to deliver a discourse on the probable characters and past lives of the people whose bodies he assists to dissect.

"This 'un may have been a lawyer," he says, tapping the cheek of the corpse before him. "That 'un may have been a politician, and received bribes, and lied, and perjured himself; but that gal lyin' thar," suddenly fixing his eyes on the corpse we have described, while he whetted his scalpel,—"that gal was once admired. She was purty, but wayward. When she was a leetle child, her parents indulged and sp'iled her. Her mother was anxious she should be a belle, and wanted her to marry above her station. Her people were pore, and unable to place her in the sassiety she wanted to enter. Then the mother keeps a pushin' her forud. She meets the wild son of a rich man, and the mother, dependin' too much on her gal's beauty, runs the awful risk. The young gal is ruined, and goes from home, disgraced. Lower an' lower she sinks, till she becomes one o' the pore painted things we see walkin' the streets at night. Life is hell to her, and she resolves to try the realities o' another world, ruther than suffer the 'slings an' arrers o' outrageous fortune.' She makes the awful plunge, and brings up here, in the dissectin' room."

"Why, Tennessee," said Horace, "you make quite a philosopher.

"It's not philosophy, it's jest a bit o' biography cut to

fit a hundred thousand cases, past, present, and to come," said Tennessee, shaking his head ruefully. "It's an old story, allers the same thing. A young woman starts on the road to ruin. It's a straight road, broad gauge all the way. There's no switches or stop-over stations. They never think to put on brakes though it's down grade all the way, and most of 'em bring up here."

"Bodies of respectable people occasionally find their way to the dissecting room, do they not?" Fred asked.

"Not often," Tennessee answered. "Colleges don't need 'em, as long as sich as these furnish 'em plenty."

"Body snatching is not common now," said Dr. Morey. "Those who do not realize that the wages of sin is death, furnish us with abundant material. The time was when subjects were scarce, and students of anatomy hard put to find material. Then the rivers and harbors were dragged by body-snatchers, who instead of taking them to the morgue, kept them concealed until they could dispose of them to some college student."

"When you began to study, doctor, was material so scarce?" asked Fred.

"Subjects were very scarce," said Dr. Morey, stroking his grizzled beard with his left hand.

"I've always had scruples against body-snatching," continued Dr. Morey, leaning back and smoking his short pipe vigorously. "I would not trample those scruples under foot for anything, unless it became an absolute necessity. I once came very near using a subject which I am satisfied was of respectable family, and which, if not snatched from the grave, was taken from the river. That girl there reminds me of the incident which happened so many years ago. It's quite a story, boys; and if it wasn't so late, I would tell it."

"Has it anything to do with the dissectin' room?" asked Tennessee.

"Well, yes."

"Then it would be quite *apropos;* give it to us by all means!" put in Horace.

"Yes, go on, Doc, an' never mind the time," continued Tennessee.

The doctor crossed his legs, refilled and relit his pipe, and puffed away for a few moments in silence, while he passed his thumb gently over the edge of his dissecting knife, to test its sharpness. The dim light seemed only to reveal the hideousness of the scene.

"The dissecting room," began the doctor at last, "is hardly the place for romance as we suppose all romance ends with life."

"Don't venture into the sea of metaphysics, doctor," said Horace. "I am afraid we could not follow you."

"All right; I will launch out at once into my story. It is between fifteen and eighteen years since—I don't remember the exact date, and it makes no difference so far as my story goes—I was a student in a medical college in this city. Sometimes students had to resort to those robbers of graves, and subjects for dissection have sold as high as fifty dollars apiece. When I attended my first term I was poor, and unable to afford many of the luxuries enjoyed by young men in the same college. There were three young men about my own age whose means were also limited. We had to purchase subjects, and not being connected with any hospital, and having rival colleges to contend with, this was not always possible. We four clubbed together and hired a grim-looking fellow with stubby beard, who haunted dead houses, rivers, and, I suspect, graveyards, for stiffs,* to bring us one. For awhile he was unsuccessful, and we

* My excuse for using this term is that it is widely known, and even though slang, it must be permissible in a doctor's story.

had almost despaired, when one day he told us he had found a beautiful subject and would bring it to the college at dark. I accused the scoundrel of robbing a grave, but he assured me he had not, but admitted to having found the body floating in with the tide. This was not quite so bad. The scoundrel did not take it to the morgue as he should have done but hid it under a dock to bring to us. Although I felt some twinges of conscience, I compromised with my better feelings, and assured myself that it was some unfortunate who had sought peace and oblivion in the water. And surely we would keep her secret. What guards a secret like the dissecting room? The grave is not half so good a place of concealment.

"Well, next evening, my friends, George Weathermore, Phil Mangett, Arthur Webb and myself repaired early to the dissecting room, to commence work. As we entered, I was shown the table on which our subject lay covered with a piece of canvas. I took up the cloth and laid it back revealing the body to the waist. It was a young woman, who had been drowned. Her body was disfigured by lying so long in the water, and yet the beauty was not wholly destroyed. The long golden ringlets were spread out over the table, the eyes were open and glassy. There was nothing sensual or wicked about that sweet face. Those seemed the refined features of a young and handsome lady. Some bark and trash from the drift-wood had settled in the golden hair, but the brow was of alabaster whiteness. The moment I saw that poor dead face, beautiful and sweet in its ghastliness, I swore that no scalpel should touch the body. Her death was not a suicide. She had not left this life to conceal a shame, or fly from evils brought on by her own wickedness. More probably she had lost her life by accident, and kind friends had grown weary searching for her

body. I was not alone in my resolution. My three companions agreed with me. But I have not told you the most singular part of this strange story. As I raised one plump arm with my hand, I discovered a strange mark in India ink. It was the left arm as well as I remember; there half-way between the shoulder and the elbow, was a perfect crescent with a star just between the points of concavity. By this mark the body could very easily have been identified. I urged on sending it to the dead-house, but our robber declared it would get us all into trouble, and finally won my companions over to his side. The body we clothed neatly, put it in a respectable coffin and buried it in the potter's field."

Tennessee, who had been interested in the story from the beginning, was now trembling like an aspen. Unable longer to control himself he cried:

"Where was it buried—for God's sake, where was it buried?"

His three companions were astounded. Recovering himself after a moment, Dr. Morey said:

"I don't know the spot, I didn't see her buried, but if I could only find the fellow who buried her, he could take us to the grave. It's so many years since I saw him, that he may be dead himself."

"Do you know anything about the mystery?" the amazed Horace asked.

"Oh, boys, don't ax me—don't ax me!" groaned the agitated Tennesseean. "I won't tell—oh, I can't tell; but I'd give a thousand dollars to know where that body is buried."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE VANDERBURG BALL.

Mrs. Col. Vanderburg considered herself a leading member of society. It was fashionable for each society leader to give an annual ball, and as hers was announced for the first of the season, society was for weeks on the *qui vive*. Extravagant expectations were indulged; for it was known that Mrs. Col. Vanderburg and her niece, Miss Adelaide, would not spare money in the forthcoming entertainment. It was just in the early winter, when society has waited, until patience is almost exhausted, for some event to quicken the sluggish blood. The watering places, which in turn have become a bore, are forgotten, and the fashionable mind reaches out after some new sensation.

The poor health of Col. Vanderburg would not interfere with the ball; Mrs. Vanderburg declared that her duty to society prompted her to give the ball, even though her husband's condition was critical. A thousand invitations were sent out. One of them was to Lord Soffellow, an English baron sixty years of age, who parted his hair in the middle, and could utter words as soft as his name. There was also Lady Snoozewell, of the English nobility; what would a ball in New York be without some of the English nobility to leaven it? Even Mr. Van Orden's friend, Mr. Harrison, on account of his rumored relationship to an earldom, and Mr. Van Orden, on the strength of his friendship with a supposed heir to an earldom, as well as his being of an old Knickerbocker family, were included among the guests.

The evening was propitious for so grand an occasion. The air was cold, without bleak winds, but clear and delightful. It was the approach of early winter, colored with the lingering tints of autumn. The evening horizon was red long after the sun went down, and little patches of scarlet clouds gradually changed to an orange, and from that to a somber gray. To a person passing the Vanderburg mansion at nine o'clock on that eventful evening, there appeared no indication of the scene of unequalled grandeur and gayety which was to appear a few hours later, save the long canopy which led from the curbstone to the vestibule doors. Not a window had yet been illuminated, nor a lamp lighted in the vestibule to drive away the gloom. Everything was as quiet about the grand mansion as if it had been carefully locked and its inmates retired for the night. A few minutes before ten o'clock, however, a light appears here and there through the heavily curtained windows, and as the footman opens the vestibule to prepare the canopy lamps, a flood of light bursts out from the doors, revealing the crimson carpeting on the steps, and instantaneously dispelling the gloom. The canopy lamps are lighted, and passers-by pause for a single moment to cast a glance into that brilliant earthly paradise which they dare not enter.

Anon comes the measured tramp of heavy feet along the pavement. It is Capt. Dunce with a squad of police, detailed to patrol in front of the building, and guard those select people from the ruder masses of humanity. Not only police officers, but a squad of detectives were stationed about the premises, to see that no diamond pin or other ornament should be snatched from the person of some elegant guest. As the hour grows later there are indications of final preparations for the festivities. Lack-

eys are running hither and thither, there is great bustle and excitement, and finally Mr. Mullhead, the well-known director of all social events, takes his place at the curb-stone, and awaits the first carriage.

While the director of ceremonies is awaiting the arrival of guests, we will attempt a brief description of the decorations for the occasion. The floral decorations were entrusted to one whose reputation, in that line, was national, and even his resources must have been heavily taxed. Four immense palms of a choice species stood in the main-hall, on either side of which were two rose bushes twenty-five feet in height, which together bore twenty-four hundred exquisite blossoms. Ivy wreathed the marble stairway, and clusters of leaves interspersed with bright flowers were arranged on the walls. Baskets of hyacinths, lilies of the valley, jonquils, and tulips weighted the air with their fragrance. Tall palms lined the walls, and even the vestibule was not neglected, for there stood palms and india rubber plants, though the main hall was converted into a blooming garden. In the doorways hung balls of roses; ferns and palms stood in the large parlor, while the fireplace was massed with mignonette, hyacinths and roses. In the Japanese parlor, with its quaint bamboo furnishings, stood huge vases filled with roses, while the entire top of the curious cabinet was a bed of many-hued chrysanthemums. The library fireplace was hidden by a curtain of smilax, studded with roses, which reached the ceiling. The picture gallery was transformed into a ball-room, the spaces between the paintings being massed with flowers. At the entrance were two immense smilax-covered Japanese fans, on which were placed the favors for the german, dispersed by Miss Adelaide Vanderburg.

At half-past ten the first carriage rolls up to the en-

trance, the guests alight and are ushered under the brilliant awning up those crimson covered steps into the vestibule. Carriages now arrive rapidly, and the master of ceremonies is kept busily engaged. People throng each side of the canopy, along the line of which at intervals of a few feet are stationed policemen, who almost uselessly endeavor to keep back the gazers. The sidewalk across the street is also lined with people. Hundreds of poor hungry children are pushed back by the police for trying to get a glimpse of the grandeur through the open door. The expense of this one night's festivity would have maintained them a year. A pale-faced girl, with a bundle under her arm, is coming down the sidewalk. There is a sadness in her large blue eyes as she comes in sight of the awnings and long line of carriages.

It was Allie Gray, the shop-girl of Calamity Row. She decided to pass through the opening in the sides of the awning and get a glimpse of the grand scene within. The long line of gay coaches with drivers and footmen in livery, the silver mountings and shining harness were indicative of what she might expect, could she get a glance through the door which was barred against her. She noticed that the crowd grew more dense as she neared the canvas, and she caught glimpses of police uniforms here and there, and heard the angry commands to keep back. Though jostled about by the idlers, she made her way to the awning and started to pass through the side entrance. She paused for a single moment to catch a glimpse of that grandly illuminated vestibule through the doors, which were ajar, not noticing the lady in costly attire and glittering diamonds, coming with her escort up the carpeted way. A policeman seeing that she was one of the common people, sprang forward and roughly seizing her arm, said:

"Move on, move on!"

Abashed and alarmed, Allie uttered a scream, and hurried through the crowd on the opposite side, tears of bitter humiliation trickling down her cheeks. To be driven away as if she were a thing to contaminate, was more than gentle-souled Allie could endure. What harm was there in her glancing into that brilliant vestibule of tinsel and gold? What most touched her heart was the laugh on the lips of the fashionable lady, as the policeman pushed her on.

Poor Allie, why weep at your ill treatment? There is one golden gate, opening into a city of greater splendor than the Vanderburg mansion, which will not be closed against cheap apparel. There are no police patroling in front, to admit diamonds, silks, seal-skins and satins, and to keep back calicoes, worsted, and linen; for purity of heart is there considered, rather than costliness of apparel.

The line of carriages now reaches far down the avenue. They drive up to the awning, and ladies, young, old and middle-aged, good-looking and homely, but all richly attired, with diamonds scintillating at their ears and throat, and fleecy wraps over their shoulders, trip along the carpeted pavements at the sides of their escorts. As each lady, with ornaments liberally displayed, passes the police, they force the onlookers back, as though to prevent some daring attempt at robbery, while on the outskirts, the central office detectives are also on the alert for such an attempt. Meanwhile from the half-open casement, sweet strains of delicious music stole, and through the doorway the eager spectators saw what resembled a fairy-land.

After the guests passed through the vestibule and main hall, which were lined with palms and other grow-

ing plants, and had put aside wraps and overcoats, they were ushered into the drawing-room, where they were received by Mrs. Col. Vanderburg, who, owing to the illness of her husband, was assisted by Mr. Edward Darlington and Lady Snoozewell, her guest. In the drawing-room the scene was one never to be forgotten. The rich and various costumes of the ladies, relieved by the somber evening-dress of the gentlemen, all combined with the beautiful decorations of the room, formed a brilliant picture.

Mrs. Col. Vanderburg received her guests in a costume made expressly for the occasion. It was a marvelous combination of satin and brocade, made with train and square neck, and trimmed with point lace. Her ornaments were diamonds, and consisted of necklace with pendant, ear-rings, bracelets, and pins, while a *tiara* of the same gems was worn in the *coiffure*, holding in place a cluster of ostrich tips. Lady Snoozewell, Mrs. Col. Vanderburg's assistant in receiving, wore a green velvet, long train, apron front of yellow satin, elaborately embroidered with silver, and low cut corsage. Her ornaments were diamonds. Miss Adelaide, the niece of Col. Vanderburg, in whose honor the ball was given, was attired in white tulle over silk, trimmed with marabout feathers and white lilacs. The skirt was made with a long train and the corsage was *décolleté*. She carried a bouquet of white lilacs. But why should I weary the reader with a description of gay costumes, or elaborate toilets? Among the prominent guests not mentioned, were General Takeall and Mrs. Takeall. The general was a rubicund man, rather corpulent, with square jaws, and roan-colored whiskers. There was also present Judge Sheepshead, Colonel Pug, Capt. Swell, and Mr. and Mrs. Sneed. The most conspicuous persons present,

were Mr. Harry Van Orden and Sir Humphrey, as he called the cockney. These gentlemen, like many others, had their hair parted in the middle, wore an evening dress, which they had hired for the occasion, and each had an eyeglass to his eye and a bouquet in his hand.

In the picture gallery, where dancing begun shortly before midnight, the spectacle rivaled all others. On the walls hung paintings by world-renowned artists, with panels of roses between them. The costumes of the ladies whirling in the mazes of the waltz, both in beauty, design, and richness of color, may be said to have fairly eclipsed the pictured fancies of those master painters. At twelve-thirty, supper was served in the dining-room, and the famous Latundo might have felt proud of the full justice which was shown to his *menu*. At one-thirty, the cotillion was danced, being led by Miss Adelaide and Harry Van Orden, its favors including costly fans, and bouquets of rare flowers. Shortly after supper, a number of guests who did not wish to stay for the german, took their departure. Sir Humphrey Harrison and Mr. Van Orden remained. None of those gay, fashionable people present had any idea that these fastidious gentlemen were inmates of Mrs. Billington's boarding-house. They might own brown stone mansions on Fifth Avenue for all any one knew. Mr. Van Orden had an air of wealth and refinement about him which suited his purpose.

"You are charming this evening," said Miss Adelaide to Mr. Van Orden, with the free and easy manner characteristic of our American girl, as they concluded a quadrille.

"By the way, Mr. Van Orden, you have not taken me to this English nobleman yet, I merely met him in the reception room, and would like a better acquaintance with him. Is he an earl?"

"Yes,—or will be as soon as his uncle dies. That won't be very long, for the old man has consumption, heart disease, and gout. Sir Humphrey is as good as an earl now, you see. He's a fine fellow is Sir Humphrey Harrison, and will some day be one of the proudest nobles in England. Would you like to talk with him?"

"Oh, so much."

"Take my arm, and we will go over where he is. The earl is very quiet, you know, ah,—and just now is quite to himself."

The cockney was standing at the opposite side of the room, an eyeglass to his eye, taking in this scene of grandeur, and muttering:

"W'at bores these Hamericans are. This is a stupid affair. Nothing like we 'ave in Hengland."

"Sir Humphrey," said Mr. Van Orden, with a gracious bow, "allow me to introduce you to Miss Adelaide Vanderburg, the niece and heiress of our millionaire friend, Col. Robert Vanderburg."

With the cool indifferent air of an English noble, the cockney turned and bowed stiffly to Miss Vanderburg. "'Oping she was well and henjoying the hevening." Miss Vanderburg was very well, and enjoying the evening very much. She was solicitous concerning Sir Humphrey Harrison. She feared he might be bored, as noblemen are apt to be, with balls among the plebeians. Sir Humphrey looked very much like one who was bored. So earnest was she in her attentions to Sir Humphrey, that for the time being she forgot her betrothed. She waltzed with Sir Humphrey, who, had he not been an heir to an earldom, would have been an indifferent dancer. But nobility covers a multitude of imperfections. Lord Soffellow, who was in attendance at the ball, was too old to make an agreeable companion for a dashing young

belle like Miss Vanderburg. He had retired early in the evening on account of a slight indisposition, and the fact that, like Sir Humphrey, he found these Americans a bore. It was soon whispered about that an heir to an earldom was present, and many sought an introduction to the cockney. Harrison received the homage of these people with the outward indifference of a real nobleman. Miss Vanderburg hung on his arm and was exceedingly attentive to his wants. They retired to the green embowered bay window, adorned with roses and rare exotics, which burdened the air with their perfumes. There they sat down apart from the noisy, chattering throng, and she listened to him butchering the Queen's English. Mr. Ed. Darlington noticed the attention his affianced bestowed on the pretended earl, and with a contemptuous smile, said to himself:

"Poor fool. Go on—make yourself as silly as you like with that soft-headed Englishman. I will control your money when we are married, and I care not who controls you."

Mr. Van Orden had some of the qualifications of a society man. He could dance well, talk a great deal of nonsense, which is indispensable to a society man. He could giggle and titter at the slightest provocation, and he became a favorite. Mr. Van Orden danced again and again with the handsomest and most richly attired ladies in the room, leaving Miss Vanderburg to his friend, the pretended earl.

"Oh, Mr. Van Orden," said Miss Takeall at the conclusion of a waltz, when he was leading her, all flushed, to a seat, "how strange your friend, the earl, is. He seems indifferent to us all."

"He is, Miss Takeall. You should know that English noblemen are so accustomed to regarding all who have

not titles, as beneath them, that it is quite a condescension on their part to mingle with us at all."

General Takeall, the father of the young lady who was engaging the attention of Mr. Van Orden, was anxious for an introduction to Sir Humphrey Harrison, heir expectant to an earldom. The general sought out Sir Humphrey in his quiet, insinuating way, which had always insured him success. The general was a man of few words, but he managed to have things happen just as he wanted them. By some means he managed to place himself in front of the earl and engage him in conversation for the few moments during which Miss Vanderburg was away from the spurious nobleman's side. The general talked of "hosses," dogs, and field sports, in a way which he thought amusing to an earl; but Sir Humphrey excused himself as soon as possible, and when alone, said:

"What an 'orrible bore that Hamerican general is."

Sir Humphrey and Mr Van Orden were among the last guests to take their departure, which they did just as the gray dawn began breaking over East River, tingeing the dark clouds with an olive color, which turned to a border of gold. These society gentlemen, as they rolled away in their hired carriage, were too much exhausted to pay any heed to the beauties of early dawn. They were pleased with the favorable impression they had made on the fashionable world. Little did those gay people at the Vanderburg ball dream that Sir Humphrey occupied rooms at Mrs. Billington's cheap boarding-house, and that neither the earl nor Van Orden could at that moment have commanded a hundred dollars.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT THE OPERA.

ADELAIDE VANDERBURG was pretty. Edward Darlington had a certain amount of admiration for her, but he was too much a man of the world, to give his heart entirely to any one. Miss Adelaide was a handsome belle, and he felt an admiration for her which was as near as he could approach to love. His selfish desire to possess wealth made him equally desirous of possessing beauty, and as Adelaide Vanderburg had both wealth and beauty, she was his choice. But Mr. Darlington had determined to marry, more as a matter of business than happiness. He had formed this resolution before meeting Miss Vanderburg, and if Miss Adelaide had been homely and old he might have proposed to her just the same. Yet, indifferent as he was to his betrothed, he felt within him some pangs of jealousy, when he noted the close attention paid to Miss Adelaide by the supposed Sir Humphrey Harrison.

"Confound that Englishman, I would like to pull his nose for him," growled Edward Darlington, as he reclined in his easy carriage on his way homeward.

"He is too attentive to Adelaide. I wonder where she met him. Sir Humphrey Harrison, an heir to an earldom. Well, I never heard of the man until to-night. I suppose, like most English nobles coming to America, he is on the search for a rich wife, to improve his impoverished estate; if he has an estate."

The idea of having so powerful a rival as an English earl, bred no pleasant thoughts. The possibility of

rivalry made this ambitious scion of speculation doubly anxious to succeed. True, he and Adelaide were engaged, but then, what was a simple engagement? Other girls had broken their troth-plight, and might not she? She was fickle enough to do it, would there be a prospect of capturing the English nobleman. Had Ed. Darlington known what a fraud the pretended earl was, he would have laughed, and allowed him to go on making a fool of Adelaide, taking his own time to bring about the exposure; but the imposture was complete, so far as he was concerned. No person less audacious than Harry Van Orden could have planned so bold a fraud, and no one less impudent than the cockney would have dared to carry it out.

Mr. Darlington reached his mansion, and instead of going to bed, went to his study and rang for wine. After drinking he threw himself on a sofa and slept until twelve, when he rose and breakfasted; then ordering his coach, was driven to the Exchange. The ordinary excitement prevailed. The bears and bulls were struggling for the mastery. Transcontinental was thrown on the market and Darlington bought quite liberally. It began to rise and he bought more until, just before the gavel came down, he purchased Transcontinental indiscriminately, not to say recklessly.

"I'll make half a million to-day," he said, as he was driven away in his carriage. He felt confused and giddy, but attributed the feeling to the day's excitement and rush of business. He stopped on his way to his club, at a saloon, and strengthened his nerves with a glass of old rye whiskey.

He went home late that evening, his head rather dizzier than usual on account of the stimulants he had taken. The next day he was in the Exchange, but rather

shy of Transcontinental. The stock was on a stand that day, but he was not discouraged. He did not go to his club that afternoon, but after an early dinner decided to visit his betrothed, Miss Adelaide, and induce her to go with him to the opera. If Darlington felt a pang of jealousy he was too shrewd to show it, and was as affable as his nature would permit. He found Miss Vanderburg sufficiently recovered from the fatigue of the ball to spend an evening at the opera.

"Are you acquainted with Sir Humphrey Harrison, Mr. Darlington?" she asked, after arrangements had been made for the opera.

"No," Ed answered curtly, not caring to discuss the Englishman.

"Oh, he is charming! He is the most entertaining man I ever met!"

"I am glad you found him charming, my dear, since he was so persistent in his attentions to you," said Darlington in his dangerously pleasant way. "He so nearly resembles a British cockney that I feared you would be bored."

"Oh, Mr. Darlington, you are jealous," said the spoiled beauty, pouting. "Your wit is out of place."

Ed Darlington was penitent, and asked her forgiveness in the pretty way a lover should; she, like a magnanimous creature, forgave him, and then they were happier for their little spat. Mrs. Col. Vanderburg, came in, pretending not to know that he was in the parlor, and gave a little start on seeing the lovers. She was about to retire, but they pressed her to remain and accompany them to the Academy of Music that night, where a world-renowned singer was to hold an audience spellbound with her sweet, magical voice. Mr. Darlington made a short visit to Col. Vanderburg's room to inform him that

Transcontinental stock was rising, and left to attend to some other matters before the hour for the opera.

As they sat in their box that evening, Adelaide suddenly grasped Darlington's arm and said:

"Oh, Mr. Darlington! there is the earl and Mr. Van Orden."

She had been sweeping the boxes with her opera-glass as if she was searching for some familiar figure, and then turned it on the parquet. There, sitting several seats back, were the two boarders from Mrs. Billington's, in the best seats their limited means could afford. They wore the genteel evening dress which certain aristocrats can always afford, even at the expense of their board bills. They had seen Miss Adelaide, but hoped to remain unobserved.

"It's all up," thought Van Orden, "we can carry our game no further."

But Miss Vanderburg at once framed an excuse for them. "They were too late to secure a box, Mr. Darlington," she said. "Go and bring them in our box; or rather, call an usher." She quickly produced a small gold-handled pencil and wrote a note on the blank side of her programme, while Ed Darlington, wishing the cockney and Van Orden in the bottom of the sea, beckoned an usher to him. Miss Adelaide pointed out the two men in the parquet, told him their names, and sent the written invitation for them to come and share their box. Of course they accepted the invitation.

"I saw you," she said gayly as they entered, "and I at once knew you had been too late to secure a box. Am I not correct?" Of course she was correct, Van Orden declared, while the cockney was cudgeling his brain for some plan of extrication from this dilemma. "I knew that was you in the parquet," continued the sprightly

beauty. "It would have been serving you right to have let you remain there, as a punishment for your tardiness. You must remember that delays are dangerous."

"Oh, Miss Vanderburg, oh!" said Mr. Van Orden drawing a delicately perfumed handkerchief across his nose. "You—ah—would not be so cruel to us as that now, would you?"

"Oh, that was 'orrible!" said Sir Humphrey with an air of disgust.

Miss Vanderburg had the earl seated on her right and Mr. Van Orden on her left and soon engaged them in such a sprightly conversation that they were quite at their ease, Mr. Darlington was quite forgotten, and sat back by the side of Mrs. Vanderburg, looking rather dark and biting his lips in vexation. Miss Adelaide soon became the centre of attraction, and numberless opera-glasses were turned upon her. Her white satin dress, elaborately embroidered with floss and silver designs of violet, was cut low in the neck, revealing a lovely throat and bust. Her head-dress consisted of her abundant hair with a diamond brooch that held in place a bunch of ostrich tips. Every time she moved a shower of golden sparks was emitted from her brilliant ornaments. Her indignant lover thought he never saw her so beautiful, as she sat, the centre of attraction, conversing with that admirable English nobleman.

There were others of our acquaintances at the opera. Fred Saunders had been induced by his rustic friend Tennessee to attend. He objected at first. The prima donna would sing in Italian, and he would not understand her. He said he thought people went more because it was fashionable than from any real enjoyment.

"I don't know what other people go fur," said Tennessee, "I'm goin' to hear that woman sing. It's the music

o' her voice I want, and not what she sings. I hev allers wanted to hear one o' them prima donnas, and I guess this is my only chance, fur I'll never come to New York agin', and they're not goin' to bring 'er down to Tennessee, to sing fur my special benefit."

Tennessee had been gloomy and downcast since the evening on which Dr. Morey had told his story in the dissecting-room. Fred agreed to accompany him, to revive the drooping spirits of his friend. Could he restore Tennessee to his former self, he was willing to lose an evening from his studies, and be bored by a song in a foreign tongue. Horace, with some other students, was going to hear Joe Jefferson, in Rip Van Winkle, so Fred and Tennessee went alone.

When they arrived at the Academy of Music, they found the seats all sold. "I reckin we kin go up in the gallery and stand up," said Tennessee, with a smile. Fred followed him up the broad stairway leading to the top gallery usually a resort for newsboys and working-people; but on this night it was filled with ladies and gentlemen of economic tastes, or moderate means.

The lights were down low around the stage, and there was a sort of gray twilight within the orchestra rail, deepening in the far-away corner almost to darkness. From out the somber gloom could be seen the end of a drum, a bass viol, and music stands, on which were broadsheets of will thumbed music. A singular hush seemed to have fallen over the audience, broken only by the subdued rustle of persons entering and seating. A few moments later this is changed by the entrance of boys with opera books for sale, going up and down, and deafening people with cries of their wares. Tennessee and Fred secured good standing-room, and waited. A few minutes before time for the curtain to rise, the foot-lights flashed up, and the orches-

tra came out from the little door under the stage, all but the drummers and double basses carrying their instruments under their arms. A few minutes were spent in tuning the stringed instruments. Then the bald-headed leader took his place on a high stool, and waving his violin bow for a baton, signaled the opening by an energetic downward spreading sweep of the arms. Trumpets brayed, cymbals crashed, and drums rolled. Sometimes raging, roaring, then softly floating away in delicious strains, delightful to our rustic doctor from the Cumberlands.

The bell rang, the curtain rose, revealing an elegant drawing-room. There was a short solo by the world-renowned singer, incomprehensible to nine-tenths of that great audience, which was followed by a chorus from a hundred throats, incomprehensible to all. The members of the orchestra seemed to be working as if their lives depended on their being heard. When the uproar was at its greatest, the little black-eyed prima donna suddenly came down to the foot-lights, and high above all, her own voice rose, sweet and clear. The chorus of a hundred voices, aided by a powerful orchestra, followed the notes of this sweet singer. Fred found himself applauding with the others. Though he could not understand a word of the song, he felt its power.

"I tell ye she kin sing," said Tennessee to a stranger standing near him.

"Yes, sir, the world has declared her good," was the answer.

"She's the best on earth," declared Tennessee. "I wouldn't 'a missed hearin' that up'ard flight fur the best hoss I've got. She's fine as silk."

The stranger smiled and raised his opera-glass. Neither Fred nor Tennessee had a glass. The Southerner

had never used one in his life, though he had read of such things. With his characteristic crudeness, he touched the stranger on the shoulder, and said:

"Say, feller, let me hev that thing a minnit?"

The gentleman handed it to him. Tennessee swept first the stage, then turned the glass on the boxes. At last he alighted on the very box in which Adelaide Vanderburg, with the pretended earl and Mr. Van Orden, sat.

"Say, feller," said Tennessee, nudging his new acquaintance in the side, "ain't that gal over yonder got lots o' diamonds?"

"Yes," answered the stranger.

"Them's reg'lar shiners, ain't they?"

"Of course they are; she would wear no other."

Miss Vanderburg was well known among the fashionable people at the opera, and was almost as much observed as the prima donna. Her vivacity sparkled from the box as brilliantly as her diamonds. A moment she toyed with her elegant fan, then lifted her richly jeweled opera-glass to look at some envious rival in an opposite box. Tennessee fixed his glass a long time on the vivacious beauty, and turned it to her companions. Then taking it from his eyes, he said:

"Fred, Fred, come here!" Fred who was only a short distance away, came to his side. "I say, Fred, d'ye see that gal with them diamonds?"

"Yes—I see her."

"D'ye see them two fellers on each side o' her?"

"Yes."

"They're our dude and that Britisher."

"What, Van Orden and Harrison?"

"Yes—take the glass and see fur yerself." Fred could hardly believe his own eyes, but the opera-glass

central hatchway, which was now converted into a dock-rats' dwelling. If the owners ever used the boat at all it was only to carry goods across from sloops and lighters. Boards had been battened down on the forward deck, forming a complete gangway.

A fine rain was falling on the upper deck of the boat and running off in small rills into the river. The man slid down the soft muddy bank, dropping on the deck of the old barge, and pausing for the last time to take a cautious glance about him. Not a soul was in sight, and only the pattering rain and washing sea could be heard. Tall masts loomed up on the river, bobbing and nodding in the darkness, and the lights from the street lamps shone dimly through the fog and rain. The man whom we have followed crossed the deck, and rapped cautiously on the cabin door.

"Who is there?" demanded a voice from within.

"It is I, Andrew Duno," was the answer in a solemn whisper.

Had Duno and his companions within been conspirators, having the destruction of the country at heart, they could not have used more caution. Some one within seemed shuffling about for a moment, and then the narrow low door opened, and a dark sinister face with bushy hair and beard appeared.

"Of course ye come alone, Duno?" said the deep husky voice, in a tone but little above a whisper.

"Yes, d'ye think I'd bring any one with me, when you said not," he answered, entering the cabin. There was little furniture in the apartment, a plain deal-board table on which was a lighted candle, two or three chairs and a stool, with a rough bed and box, comprised it all. A small stove was at the end of the room in which a fire blazed and roared. Seated in front of the stove was a

third man, as villainous looking as the other two, smoking a short pipe.

"Pyke is with you?" said Duno.

"Yes, we both live here now," Burke answered, "and we git along very well." After casting a few glances about the deck, Burke closed the door. The apartment, or cabin, as it was called, was small, the ceiling low, and the whole dirty and dingy. Small as it was, the solitary candle but illy lighted it. Down through a leak in the centre of the roof the water was falling pat-a-pat-pat. An old tin pan had been placed so as to catch it. An artist wishing characters to represent nihilists and conspirators, could not have found better than these.

"Set down," said Burke, gruffly. "Ye needn't be afraid. We're doin' nothin' here that'll either stretch yer neck, or send ye t' the Island."

Duno, thus assured, sat down upon a stool close to the table. Burke took a seat opposite him. Placing his elbows on the table and his chin in his hands, he looked Andy in the face. Duno was unable to meet his gaze and his eyes drooped.

"I came here to see you. What do you want with me?"

"Oh yes, we did send fur ye," said Burke, the broad grin fading from his face and the lines growing hard. "Facts are, we're on a golden lay. We've struck a bonanza."

"What is it?" asked Duno, humbly. "Surely ye wouldn't mind takin' a poor laborin' man in, who is out of employment, and wants to get across the river—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Burke, breaking in with a ringing laugh that quite startled Duno. His nerves seemed shattered, and he looked about anxiously for some place to conceal himself. "You've got it by heart and ye can't let go when ye want to."

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"Well," said Duno, trying to look his bolder companion in the face, but failing. "If you don't care to share, I can go." He arose as if about to leave the boat.

"Set down and hear me through," said Burke. "Don't go to gittin' in such haste until ye know what ye're doin'. Pyke and me are on a golden lay."

"You ain't—ain't—" he seemed to lack courage to conclude his sentence.

"Ain't what? can't you speak?" Pyke now turned around, so as to face the two men at the table.

"I didn't mean no harm, Burke," said Duno, with professional meekness. He tried hard to fix his eyes on the man before him, but he broke down and his voice died away.

"Can't ye speak? now whatever ye was goin' to say—say it," growled Burke, growing somewhat savage.

Duno shrugged his shoulders for a moment, glanced nervously about, hesitating between desire to profit by the "golden lay," and fear that something perilous would be required of him.

"I was going to say," he continued, "that I hoped there was nothing in which there would be any danger from the police, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha, I thought ye'd be ticklish on that pint. Well no, I reckin not; is there, Pyke?" asked Burke. Pyke who continued to smoke his short black pipe, with his eyes on the stove, stopped to growl:

"No."

"Now look at Pyke," said Burke with an air of admiration, pointing to his companion, "Does he look like a bad un? D'ye think he ever done anything in his life to make 'im dread the fly cops? No, not much. Pyke's my pardner an' we do a square business."

"Well, it's safe, is it?" asked Duno.

"Safe? why, you coward, course it is. Safe as anything. Nothin's safe these days," growled Burke savagely. "Ye tenderfoot—ye ought to be kept atween two featherbeds in a glass house where ye couldn't git hurt. I'm not goin' to send myself to the Tombs, the Island, or git stretched 'f I know myself. D'ye think Pyke an' me are fools? well, not much, if we know ourselves. But we've got a good thing. There's big money in't for some one, an' no un but we uns can get it. We're the only uns as jest knows where the handle is, and how to put our hands on it."

"What is it?"

"Well, I don't keer to make it known 'nless ye'll jine us, an' help out with it."

"I'll help if it's safe—perfectly safe," said Duno.

"I tell ye 'tis."

"Then what is it?—I'll help."

For a moment Burke sat in silence and cast glances at his companion Pyke, who nodded his head in assent to whatever Burke might say or do. Duno sat with his eyes on the floor. Both knew him to be selfish and treacherous. He would betray their secret at any moment, providing he could make something by doing so.

"You must promise to go in with us first, Duno," said Burke, sternly.

"I will."

Burke rose to his feet and went to a sort of an old cupboard from which he took a dark, square-looking object to the table. It was a book, and Duno saw gilt letters on the back making the words "Holy Bible." It was a strange place for a Bible. Placing the book on the table, Burke said:

"You know what this is?"

"Yes—it's a Bible."

"Put yer hand on it," commanded Burke, in a voice of sternness. Trembling in every limb Duno did as required. "Now yer hand is on it," said Burke, "and ye know if ye lie with yer hand on it, ye'll go to that place where they don't shovel snow. Whatever ye say or promise is an oath, an' if ye break it somethin' awful will happen. Do ye promise not to tell anything ye may learn here to-night?"

Duno, trembling in every limb, promised to reveal nothing.

"Swear never to hint it, nod it, write it or wink it, anyway, sleepin' or wakin,' sick or well, dead or livin', D'ye swear it?"

"I swear I will tell nothin' in no way and do just as you say," answered Duno, filled with awe and terror. A few moments' silence followed the singular administration of the oath. Then Burke spoke:

"I told ye we had a golden lay, and ye'll say so when ye come to know what it is, you're able to read writin' and make figgers, which is more'n me or Pyke kin do." He rose and went to a sort of hatchway or trap-door leading down into the hold of the boat, which he raised. Duno watched him carefully, as if expecting some monster or treasure would be dragged from out that dark hole. Pyke sat smoking his short black pipe, indifferent to surrounding objects or passing events. Burke descended and reappeared after a few seconds. He was dragging something with one hand; was it the corpse of a murdered victim about whom there was a vast treasure, or was it the treasure itself? Duno felt cold chills of horror pass over his frame. When Burke had climbed the small ladder dragging his burden after him, Duno looked. It was an old bag with some bulky object in it. Horror at once gave place to curiosity. It was too small to be

a murdered man. It was treasure—heaps of gold and diamonds, the ill-gotten gains of some plundering expedition. As Burke dragged the bag along the floor, he fancied he heard the chink of coin. Burke set the bag down heavily at the side of the table, and thrusting his hands into it drew forth—not gold or diamonds, but a ponderous, musty-looking book. It was an immense quarto volume, and looked like a counting-house ledger; but was soiled and rotted until the leathern back was almost off, and the leaves were in many places partly or entirely gone. It had evidently lain for years under water, and was worn and rotted into an unrecognizable mass of soiled paper.

"What is that?" Duno asked in surprise.

"That's jest what we want you to tell, ye swore to help us out wi' this and keep our secret; we think we know what it is, but, not bein' able to read, we're not certain. We guess it's the book o' that defaultin' banker who failed a few years ago, ye know, and throwed the books in the river. They've offered fifty thousand dollars fur them books, fur I've heerd it read out o' the newspapers. Me and Pyke fished'em up out o' the river when we were fishin'." One or two other books looking very much like soiled ledgers were also brought out of the bag.

"Where did you say you got 'em?" Duno asked.

"Fished 'em out o the river."

"When?"

"Not over two months ago."

Duno, the only one of the two who could read proceeded to examine the books. He opened the largest, but a glance was sufficient to convince him that the writing had so faded from the pages as to be illegible. "I kin fix that," said Burke, taking from his pocket a bottle of chemicals and a small brush. "Jest put a little o' this on,

and it'll bring 'em all out again, leastways the drug clerk who sold me this stuff said it would."

Duno dipped the brush into the mixture and deftly applied it to the yellow soiled pages. The effect was wonderful. On those yellow pages large dark letters began to appear. He had anointed the top of the page, and large bold headlines stood out before him. He read them and turning to Burke said:

"These ain't no bank books."

"They ain't?"

"No they are the books o' the ship, the *Ocean Star*."

"*Ocean Star* be damned!" cried Burke, in great disappointment and vexation, "That's the ship which was run into while enterin' the harbor sixteen or seventeen years ago, and went down in a fog." Pyke even seemed to have lost his serenity under the disappointment. He rose and swore as savagely as Burke at their ill luck. Burke seized the books and would have thrown them overboard, but Duno arrested his hand, saying:

"Hold on—hold on, Burke; there may be big money in 'em yet."

"No reward was ever offered for 'em?"

"But keep 'em any way. Some day we'll bring out all the letters, and they may be worth somethin'."

This possibility saved them, Burke put them in the old bag, and once more dropped them into the dark hole from whence he had taken them.

CHAPTER XVI.

MRS. SNIFFLES APPALLED.

Rev. William Dempster, had been trying to conduct a revival at his church. It met with poor success owing to so few attending. Mr. Dempster threw his whole soul in the grand work. But revivals are not so easily conducted in cities as in villages or small towns, and of all cities, New York is the most difficult in which to stir up religious interest.

William Dempster labored earnestly to bring souls to Christ, but the numbers at his church grew less instead of greater, and conversions fewer. Unfortunately for the success of his revival, William Dempster had the same hindrances which annoy many other good pastors; he had members whose ambition was to guide and direct, or ruin everything. Conspicuous among these was Mrs. Sniffles. She called herself one of the church-workers, and was always ready to aid with her suggestions. The good lady was never so happy as when delivering an address, or reading an essay to an audience. She had a dubious story of her own encounter with sin, which she never lost an opportunity to tell, in public or private. There were some who doubted her miraculous conversion, and she often cast a damper on the religious ardor of her hearers.

Mr. Dempster had struggled with all his enthusiasm, and brought all the members of his congregation to his aid, and as yet the results were poor. Among the irregular attendants were Mrs. Joyce, Allie Gray, old Joe Ruggles and his wife, from the street we have called

Calamity Row. They had apparently been interested in the revival, and the minister, knowing that neither of them belonged to any religious order, hoped to add them to his small flock.

One night after dismissing his congregation, almost in despair, he hurried out after Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles, who had gone too quickly for him to speak to them. There was nothing for the minister to do but follow them. He waited until the next car came along and sprang into it. The minister's face expressed the deep anxiety of his soul. How many in this world seemed careless about their spiritual welfare, and all his efforts to arouse them seemed in vain. At the corner where Mr. Sniffles lived, Mr. Dempster sprang off the platform while the car was still in motion, and running up the steps rang the bell. Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles had just entered the parlor and seated themselves for a moment's rest, while Mrs. Sniffles expressed her mind on brother Dempster's inability to conduct a revival.

"La, who can that be, Isaias?" said Mrs. Sniffles with a little impatient start.

Miss Mary and Miss Dolly, in a little flutter of wonder, indulged in a giggle as the latter hurried to open the door. She was astonished to find that it was Mr. Dempster, and her good parents were even more surprised to know that he had followed so close on their heels.

"I suppose you will require an explanation of me," said the minister on entering the parlor where Sniffles and wife sat.

"Why, yes, brother Dempster; but be seated first; you are not going to rush right off," said Mrs. Sniffles.

"Ya-as, set down, you ain't agoin' to rush right off?" repeated her husband.

Thus urged, the minister sat down in front of Mr.

Sniffles and wife. "I intended to speak with you before you left the church, but you hurried away so suddenly——"

"So we did," interrupted Mrs. Sniffles, "but it looked very much as if it was going to rain, and we wanted to get home first."

"Ya-as, we thought it was goin' to rain, and wanted to get home first," repeated Mr. Sniffles.

"I supposed so, and I came on to see you. Our revival is not what it should be," said the minister, "and I thought it best to consult some of the leading members of my congregation—"

"Of course," interrupted the shrill, cracked voice of Mrs. Sniffles.

"Of course," drawled the husband.

"We must try, sister Sniffles, to put more life in our meetings," said the good pastor.

"Of course," squeaked Mrs. Sniffles.

"I do not know any one in my little flock whom I think more willing to advise or work than yourself."

"Of course," said Mrs. Sniffles, seeming to grow taller, straighter, and more important.

"There must be some work done; and in the armies of the Lord, we must have captains who are willing to lead. It not only requires one to have a pure heart, but nerve as well. We want some one of the material of which martyrs of old were made."

"Of course, brother Dempster," assented the shrill voice of Mrs. Sniffles. "I have always contended in my addresses before our Ladies' Aid Society for the Indigent Children of the Metropolis, that we were the stuff of which martyrs are made. I have labored in all my addresses to the sisters to convince them that we should make sacrifices. But with all our lectures the sheep

won't come into the fold. It is then that our hearts are made to bleed."

"Then, sister Sniffles, we should go out and bring them in. Don't you know we are commanded to go into the hedges and by-ways?" said the pastor.

"I know that," Mrs. Sniffles answered, shrilly. "I have suggested again and again to the sisters of the Ladies' Aid Society for the Indigent Children of the Metropolis the necessity of having a meeting with a platform erected in some public place, where I could appeal to the people."

"I admire your zeal, sister Sniffles, but in order to save these poor degraded people, you must humble yourself, be willing to take them by the hand and lift them up out of the gutter."

"Won't I be humbling myself when I go down among them to preach? Won't I be ready to take them by the hand as they come to me—"

"Yes, sister, but you must go to them. You must kneel down by them in the gutter, and pray for them. They may rebuke and revile you, but you must be willing to endure all for the Master's sake."

Mrs. Sniffles was taken back by this description of true Christian work. She sat for some moments in silence. She was willing to make public speeches, and, during revival meetings, to visit well-dressed people in the congregation, and to talk and pray with them. But she occupied a position in a sort of an under-stratum of New York society, and her place was of more consequence to her, than the souls of these wretched people whom her good pastor would send her out to reclaim. She said nothing, though her mind was busy. The minister continued:

"You noticed, sister Sniffles, that the congregation was smaller to-night than since the revival began. The

interest is on the wane. I want aid; must I have help from my members. All who have been reclaimed, sister Sniffles, should be willing to carry the glad tidings to others. I want you to help me in spreading the gospel."

Mrs. Sniffles felt not a little flattered at this urgent appeal to herself, and her thin nostrils were elevated several degrees in the air. Her husband sat with a grin on his face and his thumbs deeper into the arm-holes of his vest as he gazed in admiration on his better-half. After sniffing the air a moment like a greyhound on a scent, she began:

"If the Lord wants me to go forth, to call men and women to repentance, I will not be one to shrink." Her husband, with a smile on his rubicund face, said:

"Ya-as, brother Dempster, she will not shrink from her duty."

"There are three or four whom I have had in my mind," the minister went on to say. "I think the Spirit has touched their hearts, and I feel sure they are even now under conviction, and through your influence may be converted. God may have intended you as an instrument to bring these souls to Him." The good woman was all eagerness and anxiety to begin the work of salvation. The minister went on. "There is the cobbler's wife, Mrs. Joyce, and Miss Gray, the shop-girl—"

"Of Calamity Row?" interrupted Mrs. Sniffles, her voice an octave higher and shriller.

"Of Calamity Row?" echoed her parrot husband, looking about from his perch on the piano stool.

"Yes, sister, from Calamity Row. They were not present to-night, and I cannot understand the reason, unless they fear they are not welcome. I want you to call on them and make them feel that they are. They have souls to save, and it is our mission and our desire to help the least as well as the greatest."

That thin sharp nose of Mrs. Sniffles seemed to have a more than usual upward tendency. It grew momentarily higher. Her eyes flashed and Dolly, who knew a tempest was brewing, giggled, while the husband and father looked hopelessly puzzled. Mr. Dempster, by mentioning Calamity Row, had inadvertently touched on forbidden ground. She hated them all, and most especially did she hate Allie Gray. She was willing to do anything for the Lord, save befriend that shop-girl. She regarded her as the insurmountable barrier between Miss Mary and the wealthy young man from the West. Her temper rose to the highest pitch, and fixing her indignant eyes on the minister, she demanded in her harsh, shrill, cracked voice:

"The cobbler and wife indeed! Why, brother Dempster, you must be crazy. D'ye think I'd dirty my skirts with Calamity Row and those creatures."

"They are God's creatures," said the astounded parson, "and I can hardly believe you are in earnest. They have souls to save—"

"But it is not my calling to go into such reeking dens of infamy and degrade myself and my daughters," interrupted Mrs. Sniffles, sharply.

"I thought you anxious to save souls?" was all the astounded pastor could say.

"Oh, it's all very nice for you to say that. You who stand in the pulpit and preach. Why don't you give the ladies a chance to talk in church, and you go into Calamity Row yourself?"

"I will go, sister Sniffles," declared the minister, anxious to make peace. "If you object, I will go in your place. I only supposed you would be anxious to do the work."

"But I am not, I want nothing to do with such unclean creatures as that shop-girl, Allie Gray," shrieked Mrs. Sniffles, her short chin quivering with anger.

"I beg pardon, sister Sniffles," said the perplexed minister. "You should not call that which God has cleansed common or unclean."

"It'll take a good deal to cleanse her, brother Dempster; it'll take a sight to make her respectable."

"I have made some inquiries concerning her, and she seems to be a most respectable young lady," said the minister, almost thrown off his balance by this unexpected attack.

"I guess I know. She's no better than she ought to be, and not as good. I know enough to know that I don't want my daughters to associate with such a creature."

The minister seeing that he could make matters no better by remaining, resolved to take his departure and visit the people in Calamity Row himself. He tried to smooth matters over, by saying that doubtless the duty was unpleasant for a lady of sister Sniffles' delicate nerves; but those erring souls must be reclaimed. Mrs. Sniffles assured him their church would be better without such as Allie Gray, and that her daughters would not associate with her, even in church relationship.

Mr. Dempster bade adieu to all, and left the house. As he descended the stoop he heard the voice of Mrs. Sniffles, and fearing her remarks were not complimentary to himself, he boarded a passing car, and went thundering down the street to his home.

CHAPTER XVII.

JACK BOLIN'S SEARCH.

SEATED in the small office of the wharfinger, looking disconsolate and careworn, was Jack Bolin. He was alone. The wharfinger, an old friend, had gone to the dock to attend to the landing of a schooner. It is night, and a solitary oil lamp lights up the dingy little office. The lamp sits on a long, greasy, coal-begrimed box. By the side of the lamp is a desk, with a tall stool in front of it. Two or three old dirty account books, with a bad pen and a large ink-horn, are on the desk. A cast-iron stove is in the office. A fire is roaring in the stove, for the night is very chilly. The great thick-cheeked stove is blushing red with heat. A rough pine table is on the left side of the office. A cat is on the table near the stove, dozing and purring with infinite satisfaction. The old sailor's face, as usual, was so coal begrimed it would be difficult to determine his nationality. His rugged forehead was gathering into a knot, as if there was some painful subject with which he was struggling.

"If Bill don't come soon," said the sailor starting up, "I'll weigh anchor and leave port. I'm not a wharfinger nor his deputy, and besides, I've got my own business to look after."

At this moment a step was heard outside, the door opened, and the wharfinger entered. Without a word he went to his desk, and opening a large book began to write in it, paying no attention to the sailor whom he had left in charge during his absence. Jack Bolin understood the wharfinger too well to feel offended at what

might seem like neglect. After sitting a few moments longer in silence the lame sailor rose to his feet and stumped to the door.

"Are you comin' back," asked the wharfinger without looking from the book in which he was making an entry.

"I expect not," Jack answered, strolling into the night. Though dark it was early. Thick masses of fog seemed banked up against the city, until at a short distance it looked like an impenetrable wall. On the river and harbor could be heard the continued blasts of fog horns keeping a constant roar. The street lamps at a few rods away looked grim and ghostlike through the gloom, and were totally invisible three blocks distant. As old Jack was picking his way along the muddy street, he suddenly came face to face with three men. They halted for a moment, for so sudden was the rencounter that he almost ran against them. One fellow with a cowardly air slunk away into the surrounding darkness. The other two were bold to impudence, and Jack thought as he passed them that they must be of that class of which footpads are made.

"They are at some mischief," he said to himself. "They're bad-lookin' crafts, dock-rats I reckin'. Seems to me I've hailed 'em afore. They are the rascals who wouldn't take a line for an old crippled salt when I came into port."

The ill-looking knaves hurried away to the river, going in the direction of Jack's sloop. The sailor had no interest in them save to surmise what mischief they might be at. His own cabin on his vessel was locked, and even if it had not been, there was little there to excite the cupidity of thieves. The wooden-legged sailor stumped along the street, his iron ferruled leg ringing ominously against the hard brick pavement.

Jack made his way to Calamity Row, where he came to old Granny Gride's little box-like stand. It faced the shop of Mrs. Joyce and depended on the pale light from the shop windows to supply the stand. Like some antiquated ogre or exhumed mummy, the old woman sat in her box. The sailor came to the front, and Granny Gride involuntarily shrunk back into the deeper gloom of her little den.

"Let me come aboard, Granny," said Jack.

"Surely, Jack, ye wouldn't go to hurtin' a poor old body like me," she whined from the darkest corner of her little box.

"No,—ye needn't he afraid to open yer hatches, for much as ye need hoistin' to the yard arm, I'm a true salt, an' never will scuttle hulks what kin barely keep afloat."

The old woman rose slowly, and feebly shuffled her way to the end of the box, where she opened a narrow door, through which the sailor squeezed his bulky body. He gazed about the narrow, cramped apartment to which he had been admitted, but it was too dark for his eyes to penetrate the farther corner. The atmosphere was close. The old woman, in her feeble, shattered voice, bade him be seated. Jack found a chair near the entrance and sat down, Granny Gride resumed her seat, and for several minutes both were silent. The old wrinkled woman looked more witchlike than she would under the light of day.

The sailor wanted to speak, and yet dreading the answer, hesitated to do so.

After sitting a long time, old Jack broke the silence:

"Nancy Gride," he said, in a low, solemn voice, "can't you remember anything at all about it?"

"No more'n I've told ye," she answered in her feeble, creaking voice.

"I can't believe it," he said, with a deep-drawn sigh, "You must go down into the hatchway of your recollections, and there you may find things you'd forgotten."

Again a silence fell on the two sitting motionless and ghostlike in the gloom. At last Granny Gride said:

"Have you been to the Orphan's Christian Home yet?"

"No," was the sad response, "I don't suppose it's any use."

"Ye might find some 'un there who'd know somethin' about it."

The sailor started. The idea had never occurred to him before. Why not see the people there? They might tell him something. He bowed his head in his hands and drew his forehead into a mass of wrinkles, and after a moment of thoughtful silence started up and said:

"I will do it, Granny." Old Jack rose to his feet, and drawing his hard, rough hand across his bearded face, said: "Guess I'll weigh anchor and set sail."

He started to the orphan asylum. It was not yet late, and many business establishments were open. Beyond doubt he would find the matron still up. He came to the large brown-stone establishment and rang the bell.

The hall porter came to admit him.

"Who do you want to see?" he asked.

"I want to see the captain, the chief mate," Jack answered, doffing his cap and pulling his forelock.

"Maybe it's the matron you want to see?"

"Guess you're 'bout right, shipmate."

He was shown to the waiting-room, where he stood, his cap under his arm, not daring to sit down on those cushioned chairs. The matron, a portly, middle-aged woman, entered.

"Well, sir," she said, "what can I do for you this evening?"

Once more the old sailor pulled his forelock, and gave the quid of tobacco in his mouth an extra turn, and answered:

"Well, I can't say, shipmate—or madam, I mean. I'm kinder sailin' in unknown waters without chart or compass. Fact is, messmate—or madam—I'm lookin' fur a baby."

"A baby!—what is it's name?" asked the matron, who appreciated the sailor's embarrassment, and knew that she would sooner get at the object of his visit by mildly leading him.

"Well, now, shipmate—or (I beg pardon) madam—you've got me off my soundin's. I don't know what the child's name was."

"Was it left here?"

"Yes'm."

"How long since?"

"About seventeen years ago.

"Who left it?"

"Old Nancy Gride."

"At this asylum?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, sir, I'm afraid that we can't help you. Ten years ago the old orphan asylum here was burnt——"

A look of pallor overspread the sailor's face.

"I say, shipmate—or madam—was the child burned with the house?"

"No,—no lives were lost," she answered; "but the books of the establishment, which would show the registering of the baby, were either burned or carried off during the fire, and were never found."

Old Jack was again nonplussed. Hopeless as was the task, and many as were the difficulties in his way, he resolved with characteristic pluck to prosecute the search.

"Were you aboard when she burned?" he asked.

"Do you mean was I here when the old 'Home' burned?" said the matron.

"Yes'm, that's it."

"I was not."

"Was any one else?"

"Yes, several."

"Do they know anything o' the little craft I'm tryin' to find?"

"No, it would have been seven years old when the asylum burned, and was doubtless claimed or adopted long before that."

"Well, shipmate—or madam—is there any one aboard this craft now, who was here when the baby was picked up and brought into port by old Nance Gride?"

"There is no one," said the matron. "I am very—very sorry to discourage you, sir, but I fear we can give you no information whatever concerning the child. The books were either burned or carried off by a fellow then in the employ of the establishment. He was accused of destroying the building in order to destroy the books. He was convicted of arson and served a long time in the penitentiary. Whether he is in prison yet, dead, or discharged, I do not know. There were some rumors afloat that the asylum was destroyed and the books burned to conceal the birth of a child left here, but it was all hushed up with sending the fellow to prison," concluded the woman touched by the sailor's earnestness.

Jack bade her adieu and turned away sad and disappointed. His hopes had not been raised very high, and yet high enough to be dashed with shocking force to the ground. As he walked along the street, he realized that he was much farther from the accomplishment of his object than before. Poor Jack was discouraged,

but in his despair he swore, anew, to devote his life to the one aim that actuated him for so many years.

The sailor returned to his sloop. The fog had increased in density until one could scarce see an oar's-length on the water. The deep hoarse whistle of steamers kept up a montonous roar. Jack reached the deck of his small craft by means of a board, on which cleats were nailed, extending from deck to dock. He walked aft to the small cabin, lighted a candle and placed it on a table. A few dirty well-thumbed books were lying on a shelf against the wall. The sloop lay broadside to the old rotten barge, which we described in a former chapter. The sailor had scarcely seated himself by the table, when he heard the sound of voices on the other boat. Though he had long suspected that some one inhabited the rotten old hulk, he was never before certain. Starting up, he listened. Yes, those were human voices, though their words were unintelligible. Jack had not seen the old barge used for anything for the past two or three years, save as a floating dock to which other vessels moored, and a rendezvous for wharf-rats to lounge and fish. Now he was satisfied that some one occupied it by night.

Filled with curiosity he extinguished his light, and opening the door of his small cabin, walked out on deck, as noiseless as it was possible for a man with a wooden leg to walk. The sterns of the sloop and barge lay against each other, and he stepped without difficulty to the deck of the barge. The upper part of the cabin was raised about six or seven feet above the deck. There was a window aft which emitted a sickly light. Knowing that the sound of voices proceeded from the cabin, Jack crept to the window so softly that he was not heard. Glancing in, he saw seated, on chair and benches, the three men he had passed on the street.

Was it because his mind was busy with the subject of the last records of the Orphans' Christian Home; or did he really hear them mention books? He crept closer and listened more intently. Burke was "staring the cowardly Duno out of countenance," and the timid man was saying,

"There may be money in the books, Burke; you'd better keep 'em. But there's danger in 'em too. Better not let it git out."

"Ha, ha, ha! Duno, you are such a coward yer afraid o' your own shadder," laughed Burke.

"I'm only a poor laborin' man—" began Duno.

"Oh, shut up," interrupted Burke. "Laborin' man, nuthin,'—you may take in that sucker from Tennessee that way, but we know ye. The books are safe in the hold, and if we can make a raise on 'em they're open to whoever 'll pay the most. There's no danger in 'em, and but little money, I'm thinkin'."

Their conversation shifted to some other subject, and after waiting an hour for them to revert to the books, the sailor made his way to his sloop somewhat mystified.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COL VANDERBURG ON CALAMITY ROW.

LIKE a hungry wolf let loose on the unwary, winter sometimes bursts in on the rear of glorious autumn, which, alarmed, flies before her shrieking blasts. No place is more susceptible to sudden changes than New York. One day you are enjoying delightful weather, and the next will be ushered in with a howling snow storm.

One of these sudden changes came a few days after the Vanderburg ball. For a day or two after the ball the weather had been delightful, then it grew foggy, and a rain followed. On the first cold morning Mr. Darlington came to see the colonel, whose health usually improved with cold weather, and tried to unload his "Transcontinental" on him. The young speculator was convinced he had bought too deeply, and even a small shrinkage would produce an irreparable loss. There was one hope left; Col. Vanderburg might be induced to take half the burden off his shoulders.

"I will see about your stocks to-morrow, Ed," said Col. Vanderburg. "I am getting better, and will, I think, by that time, be able to get out."

Mr. Darlington stood near the door, his fine clear face just a trifle careless and good-natured, yet had that business cunning always about the eyes. He laughed jocosely, almost carelessly, at Col. Vanderburg's answer.

"I am not very particular about disposing of my Transcontinental, Col. Vanderburg," he said, carelessly. "I thought I would just as soon give you half a million as not."

"Do you really wish to give me a half million, Ed?" asked the colonel.

"Why, yes, to be sure I do."

"Then just give me your check for that much, instead of my giving you my check for ten thousand shares of your Transcontinental stocks."

"Oh, but that is not business—"

"No, it is not;—neither is it business for a man who has stock which he knows will double in value in ten days, to wish to sell half at ten per cent. increase. Don't try to catch a man who has spent nearly a life-time on Wall Street."

Darlington flushed and paled by turns. He knew Col. Vanderburg to be a deep business man, but had calculated a great deal on his own personal influence, and the colonel's present feeble condition. It was not the colonel's shrewdness, but his mental strength which Darlington had underestimated.

"We are trying to work up a corner on Jay Gould, Col. Vanderburg," said the discomfited speculator. "I bought in that Transcontinental stock, expecting you to take half and help me tide over."

"Oh, well then, there is really a squeeze coming?"

Darlington saw his blunder when too late. With a smile, which it would take a connoisseur to discover was not genuine, he said:

"Yes, of course there will be, but it will all come out right. You see, Gould has covered his shorts, and is prepared to take hold the moment I part with the Transcontinental. I would be all right if I had not parted with some loan stock which has unfortunately been called in."

"Well, but your Transcontinental, how is it now?"

The question was direct, and as Ed knew that the colonel would only have to look at the paper lying at his side to read the market, he said:

"It's down a little just now, but if I can only hold it a few days longer, it is bound to come up. Gould is trying to squeeze me, but I shall look out for him."

"You have told the truth at last, Darlington. I will be out to-morrow, and then look into your stock. But I should be a poor speculator to take half your burden without knowing what I was about to carry."

With a light laugh Ed went down. No sooner had he seated himself in his carriage, than he said:

"The old fellow is not near dead yet. He has more

business in him now, than half the men on Wall Street."

Next day was bitter cold. Col. Vanderburg, somewhat to the surprise of his servants, ordered his carriage. Mrs. Vanderburg did not know that her husband was going out on that bitter cold morning, until he came down arrayed in furs and wraps, and entered the coach. She watched him from the bay window of her cosey boudoir with a feeble curiosity to know how much better he felt, and where he was going. But after the carriage had rolled away, she yawned like a fashionable lady, and began turning the leaves of a society novel.

The air was bitter cold; clouds of vapor issued from the nostrils of the horses. Drivers, from their perches, clapped their hands around their shoulders to keep them warm. Pedestrians hurried along, endeavoring to tuck their faces down into the collars of their coats or mufflers. Where puddles of dirty water had been two days before, were now sheets of ice. The mud and slush were frozen almost as hard as the stone pavements over which ten thousand vehicles rolled. The peculiar sharp ring of wheels and hoofs indicated extreme cold weather. The beggar in rags shivered on the corner; her pinched face looked more haggard than ever.

Col. Vanderburg reclined in his carriage, closely wrapped in his fur robes; his mind, as usual, was busy with painful recollections of the past. His disease was more of the heart than the body. His early marriage—the tragic death of his wife and only child, had broken him down. His second marriage, after several years of widowerhood, had surprised his friends. He never complained of his fashionable wife, though all knew their tastes were not congenial, and that they could not love each other. There is a sanctity about the marriage vow which makes

the loyal victim unwilling to admit mistakes palpable to the whole world. The Colonel bowed his head as his carriage rolled along over the cobble-stones.

"Oh,—if only one had been spared!" he sighed, dismally, "I might yet feel that I had some person to sympathize with me."

His mind, according to its habit, reverted for relief to business affairs. He smiled when he remembered how easily he had fathomed Ed. Darlington's design; one less acquainted with sharpers would have become a victim. The eyes of the speculator wandered out on the street. He saw people hurrying by, drawing about them costly furs. some looked comfortable, some miserable; some happy and others sad. Those in costly furs sometimes wore an anxious, careworn look, while those in thin robes seemed buoyant, notwithstanding their chilled forms.

"I wish I was one of them," sighed the Colonel. "Poverty and happiness would be better than wealth and misery." The horses dashed down the street and the driver had to use all his skill to curb the fiery animals. The warm stable, and the bracing, warming cold had set their blood on fire. The distant roar of an elevated train could be heard. At this moment, the carriage suddenly entered a noisy, dark street, with jingling cars below and roaring trains above. In many of the houses gas was burning, although it was midday. Ten thousand vehicles of all kinds were hurrying in every direction.

Suddenly, overhead, there was a roaring rush, as if some great winged monster was soaring above. The blooded horses began to show signs of uneasiness. The driver clutched the lines tightly and spoke to them. Col. Vanderburg suddenly felt the carriage leap forward, as if some ponderous battering-ram had struck it. He fell backwards confused, yet not alarmed. He was conscious

of a rushing, crashing and tearing along among vehicles, excited men, and plunging horses, and of whizzing along at a wonderful rate of speed. There was no time to act; none to think. He could only grasp the cushioned seat and try to maintain his equilibrium. The carriage rattled along, swaying from side to side, for a few moments, when he became conscious of a crash and jingle of broken glass. Then a stunning blow and fall; and then insensibility.

When the Colonel recovered consciousness, he was lying on a bed in a small, tidy, but plain room. Some one was bending over him. He felt a severe pain in his left shoulder and slight stings in several parts of his head and face. Two persons were conversing in a low voice. One was a man and the other a woman or child. After a few moments he became aware that cooling applications were being placed on his stinging wounds. The persons who were kindly administering to his wants, though conversing in low tones, were understood by the half conscious man.

"Do you think he is seriously hurt, Doctor?" asked the young girl whose gentle touch soothed the injured man.

"No. I am satisfied no bones are broken, though he's badly bruised," answered the surgeon. "Do you know who he is?" he asked of a man in blue with a star on his breast.

"No," the policeman gruffly answered. "His carriage is all smashed up so it's unrecognizable, and the driver was sent insensible to the hospital. He ought to go there too."

"These severed arteries must be tied before he's moved, or the hemorrhage may prove fatal." replied the doctor.

Col. Vanderburg now opened his eyes and stared about the room. There were but three persons in sight, though

he could hear the subdued voices of many more in the adjoining apartment. The policeman had stationed himself as a sort of a guard at the doorway, to keep back the curious. The surgeon was none other than Dr. Morey, whom we first met in the dissecting room, who chanced to be at hand when the carriage upset, and, aided by Jake, dragged the injured man to Mrs. Joyce's shop. Finally the eyes of the injured man rested on his young nurse. Her fair young face and clear blue eyes were quite attractive, for he kept his gaze fixed on her for some time. To gaze on that sweet face seemed like reviving forgotten dreams, and the wounded man felt as if he could lie there all his life and look into those large blue eyes.

The policeman, impatient to exercise authority, came to the wounded man's side and said:

"Sir, don't you want to be removed?"

"No, no, let me stay here—let me stay here," begged the injured man, his scarred features expressing his ardent wish more than words.

"Oh certainly, if it's yer wish, but ye ought to have been taken to the hospital," growled the man of the blue coat and brass buttons.

"No, no, I will do better here. The doctor here knows I will, don't you, doctor?"

Dr. Morey answered affirmatively; the officer muttered something about his being only a medical student. "I don't care what he is," answered the irritated colonel. "I have chosen him for my physician, and I'm sure I require no guard. You can be excused."

The policeman growled, slowly withdrew, and returned to his beat. Col. Vanderburg lay gazing into the sweet young face before him.

"Do you want to be taken to your home?" the doctor asked.

"No, not yet, I will stay here. She will care for me. Let her stay."

"Can you, Miss—Miss—I believe I don't know your name?" stammered the doctor.

"Allie Gray is my name," she answered. "I can watch over him. I am sure Mrs. Joyce will let me off from the store awhile."

The sick man looked very grateful, and smiled as he felt the gentle hand smoothing his pillow. He closed his eyes and seemed to sleep. The doctor said he would return soon. He had forgotten to ask his patient's name, and little dreamed that he was one of New York's millionaires. He came back that evening with Fred Saunders, who agreed to share the vigils with Allie, at the bed of the wounded man. The doctor was with them until late that night, then dressing the wounds and giving his patient an opiate, he left, agreeing to call early in the morning. The sick man had a fever and lay for the most of the time with his eyes half closed.

Allie took her place at his side, and a gentle, patient nurse she proved. Her sweet face was so full of sympathy that Fred thought she resembled a ministering angel. He found himself growing more and more interested in the shop-girl as he observed with what untiring care and gentleness, she administered to the wants of the sufferer. She did not sleep, she seldom spoke, and never above a whisper, and was at the side of the wounded man at the slightest murmur or groan of pain. As Fred Saunders noticed her devoted care to one, a stranger, who had no claim on her affections, he thought: "Surely she is a woman worthy to be any one's friend, sister, companion—or wife."

And yet she was only a Calamity Row shop-girl.

The wounded man in his delirium insisted on calling

her Aurelia, and was miserable if she left his side. He held her hand in his and murmured some unintelligible words which expressed so much sorrow as almost to move his hearers to tears. Dr. Morey came early next morning and found his patient better. He was now sufficiently recovered to give his name and address. Mrs. Vanderburg was informed of the colonel's injury, and that lady had such profound interest in her husband's welfare, as to have him conveyed home at once, the family physician called, and a nurse hired; but her nerves were not strong enough to sit by him as he lay on his bed of pain, though she went to the theatre that very evening with Mr. Darlington.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MINISTER'S DILEMMA.

Mrs. Sniffles' indignation burst all bounds, when on attending church, she found "that same crowd from Calamity Row," present. "What can brother Dempster mean?" she asked her husband in a shrill whisper. Mr. Sniffles, without the least idea of the question, repeated, and smiled with owl-like wisdom.

Mrs. Sniffles' temper rose with the tip of her thin nostrils, as she saw the wealthy young man from the west sitting just across the aisle casting shy glances at the shop-girl. What could he see in that blue-eyed creature to admire? She did not begin to compare with the plump Miss Mary, who with nose naturally turned upward, sat with her arms folded across her breast, gazing expressionless at the minister. When a call was made for those

seeking redemption to come forward, Mrs. Sniffles was horrified to see the shop-girl from Calamity Row at the altar.

There was a fire kindling within Mrs. Sniffles. Good heaven! what a volcanic, earthquake-bringing, all-consuming fire it would prove! Mrs. Sniffles grew more and more exasperated as she noted the effect of the shop-girl's act on Fred Saunders, who, in spite of all her management, appeared invulnerable to Miss Mary's charms. He was certainly interested in that disgraceful shop-girl. Why did she come here? she had no right to be in her church! Why had she a soul to save at such an inopportune moment? The members of the church gathered about the penitents to talk and pray with them; but she remained in her seat.

Mrs Sniffles's nature was compounded with the nitre of irritability, the carbon of latent passion, and sulphurous hate enough, when ignited, to burst forth with Vesuvian explosion.

Before Allie Gray had applied for church relationship, Mrs. Sniffles had left the building. There were many who wondered of her strange conduct. She was informed the next day that Allie Gray from Calamity Row, with several others, had united with the church.

"It is an outrage to have such a character thrust on us," said Mrs. Sniffles trying to scrutinize her visitor under her glasses. "Is the best society in New York to be punished with such a creature?—No. My girls shall never associate with her, I don't care how many times she joins the church."

"Brother Dempster thinks he is doing right," her informant meekly replied. "She has a soul to save."

"A soul to save," cried Mrs. Sniffles, her sharp chin quivering with wrath. "Oh, now, don't use that as

an argument—use anything but that. What if she has? it will never be saved! Such things cannot be brought up from the dregs of their degradation. She shall not contaminate my daughters."

"Well, sister Sniffles, what shall we do?"

"She must be got rid of."

"How can you do that?"

Mrs. Sniffles looked very shrewd. A new idea had entered her mind. She would quietly crush the minister, or make him conform to her wishes. "Just wait a moment and I will find a way," she said.

Going to a small escritoire, she took therefrom pen, ink, and two or three dozen blanks for calling meetings of "The Ladies Aid Society for the Indigent Children of the Metropolis." Hastily filling these out, fixing the called meeting for the next day, she gave about one-third to her visitor, saying:

"Distribute these among the members mentioned, and get as many others to come as you can. We will hold the meeting here at my house. Be sure and come, and bring all you can; for there is important business to transact." These instructions were delivered in an undertone with an air of mystery which aroused the curiosity of her visitor. The rest of the "calls," as Mrs. Sniffles denominated them, were distributed by her daughters.

At the appointed hour, parlor and drawing-room were converted into an audience chamber. At one end of the room was placed a center-table, on which lay the books of the society, and pens and ink for recording the minutes of this remarkable meeting.

Mrs. Sniffles, with glasses on her thin nose, presided. She was never more in her element than when presiding. The minutes of the preceding meeting were read, and

approved, and adopted. Then Mrs. Sniffles gravely rose, poised herself for a moment on one foot and looked about over the audience, as she had seen female lecturers do, and began:

"Sisters of the Ladies' Aid Society for the Indigent Children of the Metropolis, the matter we are called together to discuss is one of no ordinary nature. Its importance will become at once apparent when you are acquainted with it. It will be proper, perhaps, before proceeding, to call sister Spencer to the chair."

Mrs. Spencer, a short, fat woman about forty years of age, with red head and freckled face, waddled across the room to the chair, and she seated herself with all the dignity becoming a vice-president of this remarkable institution. Having waited until the chair was filled (and sister Spencer completely filled it), Mrs. Sniffles surveyed the audience, on whose faces was puzzled wonder.

She began, and the audience could hear the boiling and hissing within the crater. In the speaker's breast were the components of the direst gunpowder, ready to be ignited by the smallest spark. In the body of her discourse sparks were not wanting; without doubt some angel from the land of darkness hovered about her, flitting nearer and nearer, until his electric Promethean glance kindled the fireworks. Fearful fireworks of indignation they proved to be, soaring off rocket-wise, with successive bursts of splendor, until her voice sounded like the continuous rattling of a cracked kettle. Their pastor, who should be the good shepherd guarding his flock from the wolves, had taken into the fold a despicable shop-girl from Calamity Row. Mrs. Sniffles declared that society would retire blushing behind its screen of purity—that virtue was stupefied with horror, and the wheels of the gospel car would be locked so long as the

shop-girl from Calamity Row was permitted to be one of them. It was a remarkable speech. She concluded by hoping that some sister would be kind enough to express her views on the subject, reserving to herself the right to make the closing remarks.

Sister Plunkett, a portly lady, with a benevolent smile on her pink face, asked if they were not an organization of ladies for the advancement of the indigent of the metropolis. Of course they were, everybody admitted. Then how could they better provide for the indigent than by taking them into the church, where they could always have them under their care.

Mrs. Sniffles was about to boil over, when sister Bumpkin rose and delivered a few eulogistic remarks on sister Sniffles which mollified the president, and called forth a speech from Mrs. Gumsnoodle, a tall, slim woman, with a clarion-like voice. She thought that what sister Sniffles had said was *àpropos ;* that the sister understood what she was talking about, and every word she had uttered was upholstered with truth ; but then she was quite of the opinion of sister Plunkett, and would not retreat from any position that had been taken. She heartily concurred with brother Dempster as to the salvation of souls, and was willing to give the new convert her hand and take her to her heart, be her former character ever so bad. Mrs. Gumsnoodle managed to consume considerable time and take every possible position.

Mrs. Plunkett was outspoken in her praises of the minister. Who knew any harm of young sister Gray? She was a Christian, and brave Mrs. Plunkett declared her intention to take her to her heart and friendship regardless of her humble position. Mrs. Plunkett also said that her case was presented to the church, and she had been admitted on probation. "What has she done to be so ostracized?" concluded Mrs. Plunket.

"What has she done?" cried Mrs. Sniffles, shrilly, "what has she done? I don't think I'd ask what she's done. You all know what she's done."

"I must confess my ignorance," replied Mrs. Plunkett, slowly and carefully. "I don't know of anything Allie Gray has done which would be a bar to her reformation, or to the salvation of her soul."

"She lives on Calamity Row," cried Mrs. Sniffles.

"Well," answered Mrs. Plunkett, with unruffled temper, "we must not exclude one from Christ on account of her residence; our Saviour was born in a manger."

"That is not all. There are other reasons," said Mrs. Sniffles, tapping the carpet with her foot.

"What other reasons have you?"

"Oh, there are plenty of them," said Mrs. Sniffles, her thin upturned nostrils dilating with her sense of power. Rising to close the argument, she said it was useless to discuss the matter further. Most of the ladies present knew Allie Gray was not fit to associate with their daughters. As the new convert was only a probationer, she moved that the chair appoint a committee to wait on brother Dempster and request him to prevent the Calamity Row girl's coming into full church membership. The motion, though strongly opposed by Mrs. Plunkett and a few others, was carried. The clarion-voiced Mrs. Gumsnoodle was both for and against. The chair appointed Mrs. Sniffles and two others on the committee, and then this wonderful meeting adjourned.

Next day the committee presented itself at the parsonage, and was admitted by the good minister's wife. She showed them to the little parlor and Mrs. Sniffles, with a business air, asked for "brother Dempster." He was in his study; Mrs. Dempster said she would call him. No, Mrs. Sniffles answered that it was not worth while, they

would see him there. The minister's wife, mechanically showed them to the poor library where Mr. Dempster sat, hard at work.

"I am pleased to see you all," said the minister, shaking Mrs. Sniffles, Mrs. Bumpkin and Mrs. Gumsnoodle by the hand. "Be seated, I hope you are well?"

Mrs. Sniffles in her shrillest tones began:

"Brother Dempster, it is our painful duty as the committee of the, Ladies Aid Society for the Indigent Children of the Metropolis," to censure your conduct."

"My conduct?" interrupted the astounded man.

"Yes, sir—your *conduct*," there was an emphatic nod accompanying each word.

"What have I done?" the good man meekly asked, after a moment's silence.

"What have you done?" Mrs. Sniffles screamed. "You have admitted into our church one who is utterly unworthy to associate with us. You must know who I mean. I regret the necessity of having to be plain. You have taken that thing—that vile creature—that Calamity Row shop-girl, into our church. I had hinted broad enough on one occasion that she was not fit to become one of us, but you failed to be warned, and now you must meet the consequences. As a committee of the Ladies Aid Society for the Indigent Children of the Metropolis, we have come to tell you she must either be got rid of, or we will leave the church in a body," and she threw herself back with a most determined air. "Yes, sir; leave you to flounder in all the dirt and filth of Calamity Row."

She had risen to her feet in her eloquence and her finger trembled like her chin. The Rev. Mr. Dempster began to get at her meaning He reflected a moment and said:

"Well, sisters, I will give your demand careful and prayerful consideration. You must remember I have the law of our discipline to follow, and I greatly fear I cannot comply with your request, unless specific charges are preferred against the young sister."

"Then, sir, you will lose two-thirds of your congregation," cried Mrs. Sniffles, haughtily, and sailed out of the parsonage, her head high in the air.

Mrs. Gumsnoodle lingered long enough to whisper in the pastor's ear to be of good cheer, that all of the members of the society would not desert him.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SAILOR'S YARN.

THE first cold snap of winter was over, and it had grown warmer again. One pleasant afternoon Fred and Horace strolled down to the dock to get a breath of fresh air. Col. Vanderburg's injuries, and the care he had received at Calamity Row, were still fresh on their minds, and of course became the subject of conversation. Fred took advantage of the occasion to speak a few words of praise about Allie Gray. Horace made no trivial remarks this time, for he had seen the Calamity Row shop-girl, and was convinced that she was pure and good as well as beautiful; and in speaking of her, he went as near into raptures as he ever allowed himself to go. He at last declared:

"Fred, she is like a golden nugget in a mud-bank, or as a rare exotic amid a cluster of filthy weeds."

They had reached the outer end of the long dock, and paused a moment to gaze out on the harbor filled with

snowy sails gliding hither and thither. A few fleecy clouds were floating high in the heavens, seeming as motionless as the city across the river, whose bright spires gleamed like burnished silver. There were all the varied hues of the kaleidoscope, and mingling tinsel and gold. The blue of the heavens came down and met the dark green of the ocean. The sunbeams fell on the dancing waves, and gave bright colors to the distant city, bringing into bolder relief the sails and smaller barks. A great ship lay at the dock, and a sailor was leaning over the bulwark, a pipe in his mouth, watching some dock-rats casting their lines.

From these indolent wretches, our friends turned to a good-natured coal begrimed sailor, who was sitting on a coil of rope on the deck of a sloop tied to the dock. He had a wooden leg, was weather-beaten, and hardened by time and rough usage; yet, as he mended an old sail, he whistled cheerfully. While they watched the jolly old tar plying his needle, he looked up.

The sailor at once surmised that they were from the interior. He smiled good-naturedly, and, in his characteristic manner, and invited them to come on board. For a moment the young men consulted with each other, and accepted the invitation. They walked the long plank, on which cleats were nailed as foot-holds, to the little vessel.

"She aint a very trim craft to invite gentlemen aboard," said the sailor, "yit there is a smack o' novelty even in dirt, which pleases some people." Without rising from the stool on which he was sitting, he nodded toward two chairs, and the young men seated themselves.

"We understand the character of the vessel," said Fred, "and a coal craft could not be expected to be kept as tidy as a passenger steamer."

"O' course not, shipmate," responded the sailor, giving the quid in his jaw an extra turn. "I must apologize fur my appearance, cause it's nateral, though I be nuthin' but an old salt. Fur seventeen years I ain't been nuthin' but old wooden-legged Jack Bolin."

The old sailor was garrulous, and the young men, who were fond of yarn spinning, felt that they were in luck. "I git tired layin' here and bein' beat about like the breakers." Jack continued, "so I try to find some way to amuse myself. Do you believe, shipmates, in such things as men bein' born to perform some mission?"

"I have sometimes thought so," Horace answered.

"I'm about to solve a mystery," said the old sailor in a whisper, "and, as you young chaps look like ye might be honest, I've a notion to heave to and take ye into my confidence."

Fred and Horace were puzzled, hardly knowing what answer to make. They were too modest to urge being taken into the old sailor's confidence, yet they were filled with curiosity.

"There's somethin' queer in this yarn o' mine," said Jack, mysteriously, "but if ye'd like to hear it—and 'll come down to my craft to-night after dark—I'll take ye in the cabin and spin ye somethin' what's true. I'm not much given to tellin' stories, and I never git outside o' what I know. This yarn has a close bearin' on my life mission. Will ye come?"

Again the young men exchanged glances.

"Don't think I'm a mullet-head," said the old sailor, in a mysterious whisper. "There's more goin' on aboard our own ship than we know about. I may need some one to help me git my bearin's in this voyage o' discovery, as I call my mission. When ye come, let it be after dark, and keep a weather-eye on that old rotten hulk alongside."

The sailor spoke in such an awe-inspiring whisper that Fred and Horace turned their eyes towards the hulk, half expecting to see some dark pirate craft loom up before them. But no sign of life was visible about the decaying barge.

"She seems all right enough now," whispered the sailor, "but she's only a shark asleep. Come to-night and see her teeth."

This was sufficient to determine the adventurous youths. An interview after dark, full of mystery and adventure was not to be missed. They promised to be on hand at the appointed hour and left the sloop.

Many were their conjectures as to the revelation. They waited with impatience the approach of night. It was a dark night, just suited to fill the minds of our friends with romantic ideas. They felt their blood tingling with curiosity and pleasure, in an adventure of which the result was unknown. They crept aboard the little coal sloop as stealthily as if they had been boarding an enemy.

"Come in," said a hearty voice from within. They opened the door and discovered the old sailor seated by the small table, on which burned a solitary candle, reading an old Bible. He closed it, and laid it away as he continued in his garrulous, cheery manner, "Come aboard shipmates and stow yourselves away best ye can. Here are stools and chairs; we're ruther close under hatches here, but we'll manage to have sea-room I reckin'. Well, I'd about give ye up, and though it's early, was goin' to turn in."

Horace said he supposed they were on time.

"It's all right, shipmates, now that you are here," continued Jack. "I'm up for the next watch any way. Yer see my mission, as I call it, keeps me on deck or cruisin' about so much that I turn in at all hours, when there's

nothin else to do. I promised to spin you a yarn." The sailor who had risen to receive his visitors, now seated himself again, elevating his wooden leg to the table, and locking his hands behind his head. After a moment lost in gathering up the scattered fragments of his story, old Jack began:

"It's seventeen years ago, the sixteenth day of last month, that I was one o' a crew on a ship called the *Ocean Star*, bound from New Orleans to New York. It was in the autumn o' 1865, and a great many discharged soldiers were aboard coming home. The ship made good time and entered the harbor. It was night when we came off Sandy Hook, and our pilot warned us to wait till morning, for a heavy fog had settled over the harbor and rivers so we could not see a cable's length; but the soldiers, who had been away four years, were anxious to get in that night; wives, mothers and friends were waitin' there for them on shore, and they swore they'd throw captain and pilot overboard if they didn't go in. Every salt aboard knowed it would be dangerous to attempt to enter port that night, but we were overpowered by excited soldiers. We steamed in as carefully as we could, soundin' the whistle every few seconds. About a mile below Governor's Island, we were run into by a vessel. The crash and jar brought all off their feet. The poop deck tumbled in, and from the moment we struck the ship refused to answer to her wheel. The captain was the only man who seemed to have any sense. He made the engineer increase the speed so we could get as near the shore as possible before going down. I've been in many a squall, shipmates, and seen ships go to pieces on breakers, but I never saw such excitement as was on that ship that night. Some jumped overboard, some climbed the masts, and the long-boat which was lowered was

filled so full that it sunk. There were no other boats left and some tried to make rafts, but only a part ever got ashore on 'em. We gave signals o' distress, and did everything we could to save passengers and crew. Our port quarter was actually stove in, and in five minutes after we struck the water in the engine room was waist deep, the fires went out and the engine stopped.

"There was but one white woman on board the ship. She was a young woman, a first-class cabin passenger, not over twenty years old and the mother o' a bright little baby. I always clewed my affections to babies, and this little blue-eyed thing was so sweet and had so many pretty ways about it, that I would 'a died for it. I had often noticed the young mother, with her dark hazel eyes, and golden hair, on deck when it was fair weather. The black nurse was always near the mother with the baby in her arms. The little thing would crow and clap its plump little hands at sight o' the white caps. I thought o' the woman and baby the minute the ship struck, and run to the passengers' deck to find'em. They were in great danger o' bein' trampled to death. The men paid no attention to 'em, and the colored nurse was layin on her face as good as dead. The young woman held the baby close to her breast beggin' some one to save 'em. 'Come with me, madam, said I, and I'll land ye safe an shore, or we'll go to Davy Jones together.' She believed me and put the baby in my arms. I tore off a state room door and went aft. There I found some line, and makin' a runnin' loop, I lashed the woman and child to the upper side o' the board and lowered 'em to the water. I then slid down the line in time to keep the crazy craft from capsizin.' It was so dark and foggy, you could not see an oar's-length ahead. Steamers were fillin' the harbor with screams, but none gittin' near

enough to do us any good. They were deceivin' each other—and there were other collisions. I begun swimmin' with the woman and child on the door, tryin' to push 'em in. But the tide was agin me, and there was danger every minute o' them bein' washed off the raft. The woman was sensible, for becoming convinced we could never get a shore that way, she said. 'Take my baby and swim ashore, you can save it; but you'll never get there with both of us.' I'd already found that out, but hadn't the heart to tell her so. Just at that moment I come to a stationary buoy and a plan came in my head. I made the door fast to the buoy, then had her lash the baby to my back, tellin' her to stay on the door until I could come back for her. I'll never forget how the poor mother kissed that baby a long farewell, before I started away with it, and sobbin' and beggin' me never to desert it. I was more'n an hour makin the land, an came near bein' run down two or three times by steamers, which couldn't see or hear me, to pick me up. At last I landed at the battery and met an old woman named Nancy Gride. I gave her the half-drowned baby, and told her to take it at once to the Sailor's Home and keep it till I come. I didn't know the baby's name. I did all I could in a minute's time to urge her to take good care o' the baby and keep it for me. Then with two o' the river police I set out in a yawl to find the mother. The fog seemed to be thicker. Steamers were runnin' wildly here and there, everywhere, tryin' to help the drownin' people but doing more harm than good. The river police were not as well organized then as now; such a panic would hardly happen at this day. We were run down by a tug, and the two officers drowned. I was picked up insensible, with my leg so mangled it had to be cut off, and my side was badly crushed. For months

I lay in the hospital hovering between life and death, and unconscious o' what had happened, for my head had got a bad blow. It was a year before I left the hospital, then I set out to find Nancy Gride, but both she and the baby were gone. I've hunted for that old woman for sixteen years, and never found her till about three weeks ago—"

"Did you find the child?" asked both Fred and Horace, who had became intensely interested in the story:

"No," Jack, sadly answered. "She had put it in an Orphans' Home, and somebody took it to raise. The asylum burnt up, and some one had stole the books.

"The mother of the child, did you ever learn what became of her?" asked Fred.

"She was drowned o' course."

"Who was she?"

"I don't know. No one ever will know, until the sea gives up her dead. But I promised I'd take care o' her baby. It's my mission on this earth to find it, and I'll do it. I've got neither chart or compass to steer by, unless it be somethin' I picked up from that old hulk alongside, I went aboard them the other night while it was dark and rainin'. They were talkin' o' books, and it seems it's books they want to make money out of. They may be the books what was stole from the Orphans' Home ten years ago, when it was burned. I want to see them books, but how'm I goin' to do it, when sich land sharks hev got their clutches on em?"

As much as the students were interested in the story, they were somewhat disappointed in the *denouement.* They suggested many plans, but left without coming to any satisfactory conclusion.

CHAPTER XXI.

A DAY AT THE EXCHANGE.

"WELL, fellers, this is Saturday, 'n there aint much goin' on; 'spose we all go down to Wall Street," said Tennessee to Fred and Horace, a few days after the events in our last chapter. Lunch was over, and they were sitting in Horace and Fred's room. "I've never been at that Exchange, though I've heard so much an' read so much about it, that I think its fine as silk. Next to the prima-donna. Let's all go down."

Having put in a very laborious week at the college the students consented, on condition that Tennessee would agree to go on the elevated road, and as our rustic doctor had not overcome his dread of these aerial trains, it was no easy matter to come to their terms; but finally he did. They ascended the broad, winding iron stairway. Procuring their tickets at the window from a sullen-looking man in blue coat, white cap, and brass buttons, they passed out at the gateway, dropping their tickets into a glass box, where another man moved a lever which dropped the tickets from the glass box into a wooden one below. Tennessee glanced uneasily along the tracks. The sun shone on the bright, glittering steel rails. The great cross pieces of iron and wood seemed strong enough to warrant a safe transit. A little engine with a train of four long cars, came puffing up to the depot. It was like the flight of a bird.

The guards threw open the entrance gates of the cars, and sung out the number of the street. Our friends went aboard, gates and doors closed with a bang, and the train sailed away with an easy, gliding motion. The tops of the

houses could be seen on a level with the cars; at times sinking below out of sight. They seemed borne by some winged monster through the air. Far below them they could hear the rush of business. To Tennessee they were constantly nearing that great blue vault which seems the limit of space.

"This is gittin' up in the world, shore," he said to Fred. "I jist feel as if the whole thing would slump through at any minit. Look at them houses and chimneys way down there, and see how fur we're above 'em. Jist think if we was to break through, how fur we'd hev to go."

"Don't think anything about it," said Fred. "We are getting along nicely. Its just as smooth sailing as if a big bird was flying through the air, with us in a basket."

"That's so," said Tennessee, wincing. "I feel that way myself, and all that makes me uneasy is that the bird might drop the basket."

Tennessee's trepidation was about over when they reached the station where they got out and descended from their aerial train to *terra firma*, and took their way to the Exchange. A somber-looking building, hemmed in so closely by other large business houses as to have a cramped appearance, loomed up before them. Even from the door could be heard the roar within. They ascended the broad stairway, and turning to the hall on the right, came to a gallery which overlooked the scene.

What a scene it was! A great hall, twice as long as wide, extended below them. On the left was a dais with a desk and three or four chairs. It seemed to be a speaker's stand, and a man was at the desk. Running almost entirely round the vast room was a rail, between which and the wall was a number of telegraph instruments,

with operators. The great oblong room was thronged with wild, excited men, young, middle-aged and old, who were shouting and screaming with all their might. Some were hatless, some coatless, while the faces of most of them were flushed with excitement. They stood about in groups and clusters of from three or four to hundreds. New groups were constantly forming and old groups melting away. All was a confused babble of tongues,—a roaring sea below, not one word of which was intelligible to our three friends. The floor was littered and strewn with small bits of white paper that looked like huge flakes of snow. One middle-aged man had on a hat the crown of which had been completely torn out; another had a long rent in his coat. Four or five others in their wildest excitement had seized one and were tossing him up on their shoulders; and off to the right an old, gray-bearded man was dancing. There was less dignity and business appearance to the whole affair than at a schoolboy picnic. But that mad, wild, excited crowd were handling a nation's wealth. Notwithstanding the lack of dignity, it was business. Each minute's transactions represented millions of dollars.

Some of the brokers were beardless boys, who appeared as cool and shrewd as the older men.

There seemed no method or reason for any of their actions. A man suddenly broke away from a group and ran across the room holding his hand high above his head. A boy in gray uniform hastened to his side. He wrote a message on the small pad and the boy hastened away with it. Other messenger-boys in gray uniforms were running about, waving messages and telegrams above their heads, shouting the names of persons. No wonder all was noise and excitement, every moment was worth millions.

"I say, fellers," said Tennessee, after having contemplated the scene several moments in silent wonder, "ain't we made a mistake?"

"I guess not—why?" asked Fred.

"We started to find the Stock Exchange, but I guess we've got into a lunatic asylum."

Several strangers who were near, laughed at Tennessee's wit. The Southerner's eyes fell upon a pale, haggard face in that excited throng which seemed lost in despair.

"I say, fellers," he said, nudging Fred in the side, "there's that same chap what we saw with the diamond-covered gal, our dewd, and the British dandy."

"Where?"

Tennessee pointed him out. It was Mr. Edward Darlington, who had fallen into a cleverly set trap, and began to feel that it must prove his ruin.

"Jay Gould shows his power," said an old man at Fred's elbow.

"Is he here?" Fred asked, hoping to get sight of him.

"No, no; he's not here, but his agents are. He seldom comes, but they've not downed him, and what's more, they are not goin' to," said the smiling old gentleman. "Ed Darlington and a few others tried it on Transcontinentals, but I guess they are sick," continued the old man, stroking his iron-gray beard. "I never saw such excitement on 'Change as there was when Railway and Navigation began to jump up five to ten points at a time, and the buying in under the rule, of Northern Pacific commenced. It was a regular bear dance. You ought to have heard 'em squeal. Pandemonium has reigned with a vengeance ever since."

The excitement began at eleven o' clock. Up to that time the market was dull and weak. The latest arrangement of the Oregon Transcontinental Company to secure

money had placed the control of some shares in the hands of capitalists, among them the redoubtable Gould and Sage, both having been short of these stocks. The sudden financial strait of the Transcontinental company made it impossible to put the price up on them. The first thing Gould did was to crush Darlington, who was striving to bear the market, and to force from him at a ruinous loss the Transcontinental stock he held. This was transacted by Gould's agents, the world-renowned speculator not being known in it. It was all effected the day before. The sagacious speculator having accomplished that feat of financiering, was ready to show his hand. There was no longer reason to bear the market. To advance his own securities and make the market steady, Mr. Gould found it necessary to help the Transcontinental out of the mire. At the opportune moment a proposition was made him to join with other capitalists in a loan to the company, amply secured, and an option was given as a bonus which could be made to yield two or three millions profit. He agreed to cover his shorts and take hold. While his enemies thought they had him down, he, by the masterly generalship for which he is noted, covered at a good gain. The incautious shorts realized their situation when a call was made for loaned stock. Ed Darlington now met ruin face to face. Parties with whom he had deposited his loaned stock as collateral had taken the risk of lending it out, and upon the peremptory notification that the sums borrowed would be paid, and the stocks must be delivered, he was forced to go into the market and buy them in. He discovered there was very little for sale and none could be borrowed. Our young broker was really in a pitiable condition.

"What are you going to do, Ed?" a friend of his asked, when his condition became fully known.

"I don't know," he answered, "I am really at the old bull's mercy, and I suppose he will gore me to death."

Darlington was forced to part with his Transcontinental stock. No sooner had he done so than it began to display most wonderful acrobatic achievements. The day before he had been forced to sell at forty-five and fifty cents. On this morning it opened at eighty-seven and sold immediately at ninety four. In an hour it had jumped to one hundred and five and by noon reached one hundred and nineteen. If Darlington could have held his stock twenty-four hours longer his fortune would have been made. He would have cleared two and a half millions at least. As it was he was being squeezed to death. Dizzy, haggard and confused, he staggered away to a seat at the south end of the building. That uproar, which had once been music to his ear, failed to rally his drooping spirits. He was wounded, and had crept away from the conflict. Others might fight, but his blood was flowing, and he sought a quiet spot in which to die.

"Have you been badly hurt?" asked a former friend, coming to his side.

"I am ruined," was the answer. "We thought Gould on his back, but he only led us into an ambuscade, and I fell at the first fire."

"Will you not be able to meet your obligations?"

"No—I'm five hundred thousand dollars worse than nothing, and shall be forced to give up my seat in the Exchange. If Col. Vanderburg had helped me out, we could have tided over, and cleared a million each. But his horses ran away, he was thrown out, almost killed. It hurt me worse than it did him."

"Don't be so down-hearted, old fellow; there is luck for you yet. I understand you are to marry his niece and become his heir."

"I don't know," Ed answered, with a sad shake of the head. "That English earl has a better chance than I. A beggar with a title is preferable to a beggar without one. If he wants her, and I believe her four millions will attract him, he will carry off the prize." Then, as if anxious to change the subject, he added, "Gould now controls the Transcontinental. The company has sold him ten thousand shares at seventy-five, and thirty thousand Northern Pacific preferred at thirty-six, and thirty thousand common at sixteen. He has realized in two days two millions three hundred and ten thousand dollars, while I lost all I had, or could borrow, and much more besides."

"What caused the great advance?" Darlington's friend asked.

"The call for loaned stock started it. It was something I was not prepared for. I had so much loaned stock out as collateral, which had been re-hypothecated, and being forced to go into the market to buy it up, it caused a flood which drowned me," said the ruined speculator, pressing his hands to his hot, aching temples.

The clamor for Transcontinentals still went on. As the hours dragged slowly by, and the hands of the great clock on the east side of the hall neared three: the uproar became greater. Men with haggard faces and contracted brows, rushed hither and thither, screaming as though their lives depended on being heard. The lines of messenger boys in gray uniforms were pouring in at each door. The confusion increased with every moment. There was a great cluster about the post on which was marked Transcontinental. Shouting, screaming, and jeering went on. One man standing as high on his toes as he could, was waving his hand in the air and shouting something unintelligible to our friends. Another, another and another

hand went up until it became a tempest of waving hands. They were jammed so close together, that one could have walked on their heads. "Who is that chap settin' down over thar?" asked Tennessee, pointing to Ed Darlington. "I mean the feller close to the finger board that says 'Transcontinental.' He looks kinder sick."

The old gentleman adjusted his glasses, and after a moment answered: "Oh, that is Darlington, a speculator, and he is sick. He is one who tried to form a syndicate to crush Jay Gould, but got himself on the wrong side."

"He looks ruther porely," said the Southerner. "Some o' the others seem happy enough."

"Yes, they are lucky ones. That man with the crown torn out of his hat, who has bawled himself hoarse, has made two hundred thousand out of Northern Pacific preferred, in the last four days. That old man you saw dancing made a hundred and fifty thousand in one hour. Now see that middle-aged man who is kicking the hat of another over the floor as if it was a foot-ball. They are partners who have made a cool half million on Wabash. Millions are made and lost here every hour. They sometimes become so elated over their sudden good fortune, that they pull each other about and tear their clothes like a parcel of schoolboys. The Exchange is a wild place, but here you can study human nature."

The uproar was deafening. Sometimes it would gather in intensity until it burst forth in a terrible shout, making the great building ring from foundation to roof.

"It's a dangerous place to do business," said the old gray-haired philosopher who stood between Fred and Tennessee. "A man gets so excited that he hardly knows what he is doing. Some of those fellows have no idea how deep they are involving themselves."

The Exchange hall seemed to grow darker every mo-

ment as the hour of closing drew nearer. Only one minute to three. That minute was worth millions. The vast crowd of speculators swayed back and forth like a dashing tide. The uproar and confusion before was mildness compared to the pandemonium which reigned now. Buying and selling to the amount of millions went on every second. The man at the president's desk rose with the gavel uplifted. The last second had come. What would some not have paid for one minute more! But all their untold wealth could not purchase it. A swelling roar went up, through which could be heard the sharper ring of the mallet. One, two, three!

The effect was magical. At the last rap, every voice was hushed. Books were closed and those wild, excited men at once become sober shrewd financiers. They began filing away as rapidly as they could, and in five minutes after the last stroke of the gavel, the Exchange hall was deserted. Our friends made their way up the street, and boarding a car, returned.

CHAPTER XXII.

FRED'S LOVE.

FRED SAUNDERS had resolved to become a student, a philosopher, a traveler, perhaps an author. He was wedded to his books, and ignored society.

Fred had always been stoical on questions of love. Had all the damsels of New York been similar to Miss Mary Sniffles, there is no doubt that Fred would have held to his position. But with Allie Gray it was different. She was not at all like the plump expressionless Miss Mary. Her shy, half-bashful, artless manner, was

decidedly winning to a sensible young man. Whenever he met her (and someway of late they frequently met), Fred found himself admiring her pretty face and figure. Her whole manner was marked by refinement and goodness of heart which a life of vicissitudes could not overcome. In those large blue eyes, that intelligent face and clear complexion, he had seen her rich womanly nature.

Love makes its own light, and even Calamity Row, with its gloom, its uproar, and its dingy buildings, ragamuffins and squalid misery, became the brightest sunshine for Fred.

Fred had never owned even to himself that he loved Allie Gray, yet he felt that she must in some way know the truth which he would not even admit to himself. When soul meets soul, there is no pass-word, or sign, nor mysterious grip by which they are cognizant of each other. From the moment Fred had rescued the shop-girl from beneath the wagon, he felt himself irresistibly drawn toward her. He had admired her as an honest toiler in the dark little shop; but when he saw her spread her wings as a ministering angel at the bedside of the wounded stranger, he felt that it would be no sin to love her. A spirit so pure—a soul so lofty, cannot be hidden; in due time it will reveal itself. As for Fred, in his secluded scholarly life, and with his glowing fancy, he saw women either as heavenly visions, or as demons. There was no middle ground. She was either supremely good or supremely bad.

"I must be doing wrong," Fred thought, as he came out of Mrs. Joyce's shop, which he had entered on pretense of making some trifling purchase. "I know I am doing wrong, why do I go there?" Perhaps within his breast he felt a twinge of conscience. Did he know that during the brief moment he bent over the counter, his

eyes had spoken volumes? It is true his lips had said nothing which would betray the secret of the heart, but his voice had a tender intensity which she must have felt.

"I am on dangerous ground," soliloquized Fred, hastening homeward, "and now the question has come whether it's better to defy the world, or to tear out my heart and leave it behind me? If I marry her I can never hope for her to enter the society which I desire for my wife. But could I not be happy with her? Would it not be enough to make us a world all to ourselves? Fashionable people will point to her with scorn and say: 'Who is she?' 'A shop-girl from the worst neighborhood of New York,—a foundling picked up from the gutter, by Fred Saunders.' My friends will say I am mad. No, I cannot do it. Could I ask my mother to take such a woman to her heart and call her daughter? And yet could a mother take a fairer, purer being in her arms? No, no, no!"

Had Fred been at home he would have done as a son should in such matters, taken his mother into his confidence and asked her advice. But he was in the city, with no friends, save the new ones he had made.

It was a bleak Sunday morning. The snow began to fall in soft flakes and continued to come faster and faster, until the air was full, and a white winding-sheet enshrouded the great city. Fred left his room, with a plan formed in his mind. He made his way to an office where messenger boys were furnished. Securing one, he gave him a note in a carefully sealed, dainty little envelope. The answer was to be brought to his room. When Fred came back he was nervous, and started at the slightest sound. He looked guilty; he wanted to tell what he had done, and yet he dared not. The door-

bell rang and he started; dreading and hoping he dared not say what.

No tidings came for him yet, and he settled himself down to wait. Again the door-bell rang. Footsteps were heard in the hall. It was the light, almost noiseless tread of Mrs. Billington. Neither Tennessee nor Horace noticed the anxiety with which Fred listened to that footfall. She paused at the door and rapped. Fred rose hastily and opened it.

"A note for you, Mr. Saunders," said his smiling landlady, bowing and handing him a dainty little envelope. The superscription was in a neat, lady-like hand, and Fred trembled with eagerness as he took it. Mrs. Billington retired with a knowing smile, and Horace and Tennessee were too busy to notice with what alternating hope and fear he took the missive, and hastening to the recess of the window, broke the seal. A sigh of glad relief escaped him as he read it again and again; finally folding it, he placed it in the inside pocket of his coat, next his heart.

The remainder of the day was spent by Fred in secret exultations and regrets. One moment he was the happiest mortal in existence; the next he was plunged into the most miserable depths of despair.

"I am a fool," he said to himself. "I am infatuated, charmed, bewitched, dragged to my ruin. Ye gods, can I not break the spell? But it is not her fault. She has never tried to entrap me. It is fate, and surely fate would not place a deadly snare in my pathway."

After an early tea he went to Calamity Row. He entered Mrs. Joyce's little shop and was invited by that lady into the little parlor at the rear. Here Allie met him.

She rose with a smile of welcome, and extended her

hand to greet him. Never had he seen her so beautiful. Fred's spirits began to revive. He blessed his lucky stars for having sent the note, and blessed them twice over that it was accepted.

"It is very stormy, is it not, Mr. Saunders?" Allie asked, after they were seated before the cheerful grate.

"I believe it is," said Fred, with delightful absent-mindedness. "I was thinking so much about the comfort of this parlor, that I took little note of the weather."

She fixed her large blue eyes on him for a moment, and answered:

"Whatever attraction this poor little parlor may have, you cannot be permitted to enjoy them this evening. We have services at our church; you have promised to be my escort, and I shall hold you to your bargain."

"I supposed, as it is so stormy this evening, that you might forego church, Miss Gray."

"The storm can't be very severe, not to have made any more impression on you than it did."

Fred found himself cleverly caught and changed the subject.

All through the conversation that followed there was a religious vein which makes woman lovely, even to an unbeliever.

"It is quite time we were going, Mr. Saunders. Excuse me, while I get my wraps." She rose, and lightly tripped away to an apartment still further in the rear.

She possessed a girl's youth and beauty, with something of the charming wisdom of a matron. Her life had evidently not been all drudgery, for she had found time to improve her mind. She had a fair, if not an excellent

education; and some accomplishments of which ladies could not boast. When she appeared in a fur-lined circular, jaunty seal-skin turban with veil gracefully wound round it, and the tips of the daintiest little arctics just peeping from beneath her skirts, he was sure she had never seemed so lovely.

They went to church together, and I can hardly tell how shocked Mrs. Sniffles was to see the new member from Calamity Row, sitting by the side of that wealthy young man from the West. She nudged her husband, who was dozing at her side, and whispered:

"I told ye so!"

He repeated with owl-like gravity: "Ya-as, I told ye so." Miss Mary was indignant and sat with her fat arms folded across her breast, and her pug nose, lightly spattered with bran-like freckles, turned upward toward the minister.

It would be needless to give an account of the return to that little parlor, which of late had become more attractive to Fred than the most palatial residence in the city.

"Will you come in and rest awhile?" asked Miss Gray, in a manner which Fred at one moment thought tenderness, and the next could only believe politeness. He understood little of women. His chief knowledge of them he had obtained from books, which is not so good an education as the study of people.

They entered the little parlor, which they found unoccupied, and again seated themselves before the cheerful grate. An awkward silence followed. He fixed his eyes on her, and she permitted him to gaze a moment into her deep blue orbs. There was no boldness in her manner.

"Do you like the city, Mr. Saunders?" she asked,

more to break the spell of his piercing eyes than to engage in conversation.

"Not so well as the country; though I grow to like it more and more every day," he answered absently. After a moment's silence he added: "I shall leave it sometime, never to come back."

She knew he was waiting for her to indicate regret, but she tried to appear unconcerned. If her heart had a secret she would keep it. Allie had been taught by a thousand examples coming under her own observation, that men are sometimes false, even laying snares for the feet of unwary young girls. The most subtle snare to entrap a maiden is her own trusting, loving heart.

"Will you not be sorry?" Fred asked. She was too truthful to say no, and hesitated to say yes; so she made a non-committal answer:

"Of course, Mr. Saunders, I always regret to have friends go away."

"Have you no preference among friends? Do not some stand ahead of others?" he asked.

"It is natural that I should have some more dear to me than others," she answered in such an indifferent way that Fred was a little uneasy. He might, after all, be mistaken. It would be a pleasure to know she loved him, even though she could never be his wife. Cruel Fred;—do you intend to break this poor girl's heart in order that you may for a moment bask in the sunlight of her love? After another short silence he said, in a strange, half-subdued manner:

"I desire to be reckoned among your best and dearest friends, Miss Gray." For a brief instant a swift tell-tale flush overspread her face, to be succeeded by a death-like pallor, while her large, blue eyes drooped beneath his earnest gaze. Fred's words had not expressed so much

of his intense passion as the deep, tender tone of his voice.

"One should have no special friends," answered the girl, as soon as she could in a measure regain her composure. "God has been so good to me, that I cannot but love all his handiwork, unless, by the arts of the Evil One, it has become so disfigured that the Master's creation has been destroyed."

"You are a dear girl, Miss Allie," cried Fred, seizing her hand with half-restrained enthusiasm. "You are a saint, if in these modern days we are permitted to have saints. I, who have been reared by Christian parents, ought to hide my head in shame, when I contrast my poor, weak Christianity with your noble faith. From you I draw only inspiration for good. I could not have an evil thought in your presence. You seem to lift me from earth to heaven. I have doubted the authenticity of the Scriptures and the divinity of Christ, until I met you; but I can never doubt again."

She raised her eyes once more, letting him look into them, then she gently withdrew her hand.

"You must not talk that way, Mr. Saunders," she said, and a look quite puzzling to him came over her face.

Ten minutes later as he was on his way to his boarding house, Fred cursed himself for being a fool, and wished that he had died before he sent the note. Love and misery are not strangers, yet Fred's love and Fred's misery were of an unusual kind. He was battling with pride, and when that contest was decided, his course would be clear.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VAN ORDEN'S PLAN.

Had Carlyle intended his description of a dandy for Harry Van Orden, he could not have come nearer the life and intent of that young gentleman. He was "a living martyr to the eternal worth of clothes."

He occupied one of the poorest rooms in Mrs. Billington's boarding-house; though Sir Humphry Harrison's was no better. Both were hall rooms, which could not be heated, and were but poorly ventilated. The two "dewds," as Tennessee termed them, frequently became cold, and intruded themselves on our student friends, who kept warm rooms.

Had the fashionable public known their circumstances, it is doubtful if they would have been admitted into society. Van Orden had, in his small, uncomfortable room, a sample case of crackers and fancy cakes, which, during four days of the week, he carried about the city, taking orders from small retail dealers and grocery men, for a large city bakery. The manufacturing establishment allowed him a commission on his sales, and this was quite enough to keep an economical single gentleman. Of course, if he had been referred to as a cracker peddler, Mr. Van Orden would have treated the matter as a joke. The fashionable world would have been horrified to know that Sir Humphrey occupied so mean a room in so cheap a boarding-house, and was a traveling salesman for a tea company. The merchants who bought of him never dreamed that they were dealing with an earl. It was certainly a strange freak on the part of the earl, and

would have caused grave suspicions in the minds of the fashionable world, had it been known. But great men have their eccentricities, and if his lordship desired to indulge in a little harmless amusement, who could gainsay his right to do so? Van Orden was tolerated by the fashionable people on account of his long line of eminent ancestry. It has been hinted that family pedigrees can be bought, but we are not able to verify the assertion. Mr. Van Orden was losing his place in that social world; but, as the most intimate friend of an English nobleman, studying American character, he hoped to assure his position in society for many years yet to come.

On the same Sunday on which Fred was worrying over his love affair, Mr. Van Orden lay on the bed in his cold, cheerless room. He looked very blue for a fashionable gentleman. His head rested on the pillow; and the straight parting in the middle seemed in serious danger of obliteration. He drew some bed clothing across himself, and put his hands underneath, to keep them warm. He did not make any complaint of the cold. He had always urged, as an excuse for a fireless room, that he liked cold. Fires were a bore, creating unhealthy air. The earl, who held a like opinion, sat in his room, similar to Van Orden's, with overcoat and gloves on, and yet hardly able to endure the cold. He rose and took several turns across the narrow apartment.

These fashionable gentlemen had learned that those hard-working students did not appreciate their senseless talk, and so they refrained from entering the warm, cosey rooms, though their shivering bodies and aching fingers strongly tempted them to do so. The earl and Van Orden preferred elegance to ease, quite an essential element in the dandiacal body, and one for which Carlyle calls him a martyr. Misery loves company, and the earl

thought his friend's room would be preferable to his own, where his breath formed a small fog cloud at each exhalation. He went to Van Orden's room and rapped on the door.

"Come in," answered that worthy from the bed, where he lay submerged in bed-clothes. Van Orden turned his head back and fixed his eyes on the door, which opened and admitted the earl.

"Oh—ah! Sir Humphrey," said Mr. Van Orden. "Come in—this is really a pleasure—an exquisite pleasure. My room is a little cool, Sir Humphrey, but it's more conducive to health. Ah! really."

"Hamericans are a bore," said the earl, seating himself on a straight hard chair, folding his arms closely to keep warm. "They want to swelter and roast like a vulgar blacksmith at his forge."

"You and I, Sir Humphrey, are of different material; we have better blood in our veins."

We do not know that the shrewd Van Orden really believed that his friend was a nobleman, but he certainly had made others believe it, which answered his purpose as well. Van Orden possessed a few simple qualifications essential to a society man. Fortunately for him, depth of brains are not required; yet, Van Orden was not a simpleton. He was shrewd and unscrupulous, or what the admirers of such traits call "sharp."

"'Ow egotistical your Hamericans become. Hif they were honly in London a few days, I fancy they would 'ave some of the hegotism taken hout of them. That rude fellow from Tennessee, who butchers the Queen's Henglish, is a desperado. He's a hass——"

"Ah—yes, my dear earl!" said Mr. Van Orden, drawing the bed covers more comfortably about him, while he watched the frosty breath which his friend emitted. "He

is so rude—he lacks culture. They all do. The West is peopled with a class of savages little better—ah! than the aborigines."

"'Ad he not been desperate, hi would never 'ave suffered that hinsult about Bunker 'ill. The Henglish Harmy and Navy are to-day the best in the world."

"Ah—no doubt about it, Sir Humphrey. We are not at war with England, and, in fact, except with a few of those people who claim to be patriots, the war of a hundred years ago has been forgotten."

Van Orden upon the bed, the covers drawn across his face to protect his nose from the frosty air, while the earl, whose nobility may have kept his blood warmer, sat with stoical indifference.

Mr. Van Orden had really conceived an idea. If it worked well, it promised to bring a golden harvest to himself and the earl.

"Sir Humphrey!" he suddenly said, turning on his side and fixing his eyes on his visitor. Sir Humphrey, who had been gazing at the frosty window, now turned toward the bed. No part of Mr. Van Orden was visible save the top of his head, and the path running along the middle.

"Wouldn't you like to be rich, Sir Humphrey?"

"It's common with us hall to 'ave wisions of wealth, and wish 'em to be realized."

"You can, Sir Humphrey—ah—you can," Mr. Van Orden suddenly declared, venturing to peep from beneath the bed-clothes at his friend.

"My friend," said the earl, with as much the air of a nobleman as he could assume, "I would be wery thankful if you'd point hout to me the steep and thorny path to wealth."

"Ah—it's not steep, my dear earl; nor is it thorny,"

said Mr. Van Orden, starting to a half-sitting posture and fixing his eyes on the cockney.

"What do you mean, Mr. Van Orden?" the pretended earl asked, in astonishment. "You speak in riddles; caw'nt you make yourself plain?"

Mr. Van Orden got out of bed, made sure that the door was closed and no one listening in the hall, then returning, wrapped the covers once more about him, and in a low tone began:

"Suppose, Sir Humphrey—ah, only suppose, you know, that a young lady in New York really believed you to be an earl—"

"Well, is not my huncle a hearl, and wont Hi be a hearl when he dies?"

"Of course—oh, of course—but you know your uncle may be only a great uncle with fifteen or twenty other heirs between you and this earldom. But—ah—you know now, dear earl," his voice sunk almost to a whisper. "Suppose she thought you as good as having your earldom in possession? Now you understand—ah—dear earl—suppose this young lady was herself an heiress to three or four millions, which would be hers as soon as her uncle died, and suppose she would give her heart, hand, and fortune for nobility?—"

He paused to let his words soak into the dull brain of the Englishman.

"Ah—my dear earl," continued Van Orden, "I see that you hardly comprehend me. Now, I know a young lady who is worth three or four millions, whom you, as earl, could marry. Your presumptive title would win her, and you could get control of her wealth before she discovered.—You could get absolute control of her fortune: how would you like it?"

Mr. Van Orden's eyes sparkled with unusual brilliancy.

The Englishman, without drawing his benumbed hands from the pockets of his great-coat, asked:

"His she 'andsome?"

"Beautiful—perfectly beautiful. She is accomplished, a belle, and very rich. Now, mind you, Sir Humphrey," he said, pointing his finger significantly at the earl. "Sir Humphrey Harrison as earl, without a dollar, could win her; but plain Humphrey Harrison with a million could not so much as kiss her hand."

Englishmen are proverbially slow at guessing, but when once they get at the thread of a mystery, with bulldog tenacity they cling to it, until it is solved.

"'Ave Hi not seen 'er?" he asked.

"Yes,—you have seen her and doubtless even now guess whom I mean; but, Sir Humphrey, you can nayver succeed without my help."

"You 'ad just has well speak plain; Hi know who you mean," said the earl, rubbing his hands in order to get up a livelier circulation.

"Well, the young lady I mean is the wealthy Miss Vanderburg," answered Ed Van Orden in a cautious whisper. "She will inherit all her uncle's wealth when he dies, and that will be soon."

"Isn't she halready betrothed?" asked the Englishman.

"What does that signify?" asked Van Orden, retiring again beneath the bed-covers. "She is not married, and she don't care much for the man to whom she is engaged. The sooner she gets rid of him the better she will like it. Ah—we can push him overboard, and take you as a substitute. Nyther he nor she would care much. If I do it for you, will you remember me?"

The Englishman gazed stupidly at his companion for a few moments. His face showed that he was puzzled to comprehend the other's meaning.

"Understand me fully, Harrison," said Van Orden, with more energy than he had previously shown. "If I help you to four millions, I shall require one million for doing it."

What man, especially one as unscrupulous as Sir Humphrey, would object to this proposition? He consented and they proceeded to mature their plan.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW THE PLAN SUCCEEDED.

QUITE in contrast with the cold, cheerless rooms of our English earl and his American friend, is the cosey parlor of Miss Adelaide Vanderburg. The grate glows with generous warmth, and the lights and shadows play upon the crimson velvet carpets, while the frescoes, panels, and hangings give an abundant variety to the richness of the scene. Nothing seemed wanting to make Miss Adelaide happy. True, she had heard whispers concerning Darlington's recent losses; but she gave them no thought. If he had failed, in all probability it would put an end to their engagement, for it was not intended that she should marry a beggar. Why should she care? True, Darlington was handsome enough; he was even tolerable in society, though by no means brilliant; but Darlington a beggar would never do for her husband. She had been frequently at the bedside of her uncle, who was slowly convalescing. Mrs. Vanderburg could afford little of her precious time to her husband, though he was near death's door. Miss Adelaide was alone in her boudoir when her uncle, pale and weak, came in, leaning on his cane. His face still bore its scars from the wounds he had received in the accident on Calamity Row.

"Be seated, uncle. I am so glad to see you able to walk about," said Adelaide, hastily folding a note she had been reading, and putting it into a small escritoire.

"I am not well, Ada; but I have lain so long in my room that I thought I would come down. Is it a cold day?"

"Very uncle,—judging from the way people shiver and hold their wraps about them as they hurry along the streets. Sit down, uncle, I want to talk with you."

"About what, child?" he asked, taking a seat on the sofa.

Whatever were Adelaide's faults, she had always been a friend to her uncle. True, the demands of fashionable life took her from him much of the time, but then her few visits were real gleams of sunshine to the poor forsaken old man living in his cold isolation from those who should have tenderly cared for him. There was not much concealment or beating about the bush with Adelaide. She came directly to the subject on her mind.

"I want to talk with you about Ed Darlington, uncle.

"What of him? You are engaged, I believe?" said her uncle.

"We were—yes we are; but have you not heard of him?"

"I read in the papers this morning that he had got badly squeezed, in his loans and Transcontinental stock."

"He is ruined, uncle.

"Well, I don't know. He has more lives than a cat, and like one, may fall on his feet yet."

"But I was told this morning, by one who knew, that he has lost his place in the Exchange, and could not possibly pay his debts. They say he is five hundred thousand dollars wore off than nothing."

"That is serious, Adelaide."

"Now, uncle, to be plain with you," she said taking a

seat on a low ottoman at his side. "ought I to keep my engagement with him?"

"Do you love him, Adelaide?"

"I don't think I do, uncle. I could not love any one without wealth or power. I will wed a millionaire, a lord, or nobody."

"If you do not love him, you should not marry him," was her uncle's response as he rose and left the room. There was something in her manner that was not congenial to the invalid, and he would rather be alone.

When he was gone Adelaide walked to the bay window, where she stood gazing out upon the cold, frozen street. She did not shudder as she saw the poor half-frozen beggar on the corner. In fact the sharp contrast seemed to add to her own comfort and happiness. The door unceremoniously opened, and Mrs. Vanderburg entered. There was a strange look in her eyes. She was not exactly angry, yet the reproving glance was full of bitterness. Adelaide met her gaze. Aunt and niece understood each other in a moment.

"You heard what we said, aunt?" said Adelaide.

"Yes; and I hardly know whether I approve it or not Have you no compassion on Edward in his distress."

"Yes, aunt; but then I do not see that I am compelled to chain myself to his lifelong poverty, in order to make amends for his carelessness.

"It may not have been carelessness," said Mrs. Vanderburg, biting her pretty lip in vexation. "The wisest and most sagacious sometimes fail. Luck has much to do with it."

"I don't want to be on the unlucky side," said Adelaide, with a laugh.

"It is true that when one is on the decline all friends will desert," said Mrs. Vanderburg.

"Oh, aunt Rosa, how strangely you talk. No one deserts Edward. Our betrothal was only a matter of business. The bankruptcy of one of the contracting parties dissolves the partnership. You certainly would not have me marry him now?"

Mrs. Vanderburg threw herself on the couch, and with her beautiful head resting on her jeweled hand, answered "No, I can't say I would. Your uncle is to blame. He should have loaned him enough to have carried him through."

"But, aunt, you know uncle was down at the time from his hurt, and we hardly expected him to live," said the niece, loyally.

"No, I suppose not. It was unfortunate," and Mrs. Vanderburg sighed dismally. Adelaide started and fixed her eyes on her aunt, who turned away, and a moment later rose to leave the apartment. As she went out Adelaide gayly said:

"By the way, aunt, Van Orden and the earl are to call soon—I expect them every moment. I have a notion to try to capture Sir Humphrey. I should be a lady then, and that is certainly something worth trying for."

She paused in the doorway and turning her bewitching face a moment to Adelaide, said:

"I believe you are capable of it. Marriage with you is no more than a business contract."

"Was yours more?" This was a "poser." Mrs. Vanderburg turned about and hurried away. Adelaide, laughed merrily and said to herself: "She will not again mention business marriages. The law says marriage is a civil contract, and why shouldn't one treat it accordingly. I for one am going to do so. I have beauty and wealth, but I want a title. I want to be a lady. Here is an English nobleman. He is not hideous by any means.

and is young. He has, or soon will have, the title of earl. But he does not possess wealth, as I am informed by his most intimate friend, Mr. Van Orden. His ancestral estates are heavily mortgaged. He is an earl, but poor. He wants money and I want nobility. If we see fit to exchange, who can say it is not a fair barter? Surely not my aunt, who married dear uncle Robert to save her place in society."

There was a ring at the door bell. Of course it was the earl and his friend. An earl was coming, and one less haughty would have shown some symptoms of nervousness. Perhaps she reclined a little more gracefully as she awaited the *denouement*. A servant entered with the cards of Sir Humphrey Harrison and Mr. Harry Van Orden, on a silver tray.

"Show them up, Jennings," said Miss Adelaide, with no more trepidation than if they were the most ordinary people in the world.

A few moments later Jennings reappeared followed by two smiling young gentlemen dressed in the most approved fashion. Their hair was parted in the middle, and the mustache of one and whiskers of the other perfect examples of care and taste. Each carried an eyeglass, and wore diamonds that seemed genuine.

"Aw — Miss Vanderburg —" said Mr. Van Orden, bowing very low at the entrance, "permit me to congratulate you on looking splendid, ah—perfectly splendid. It is so cold, ah—and so disagreeable without, that one feels you know, ah—like entering another sphere to find you in this elegant apartment."

"Oh, Mr. Van Orden, be done with your nonsense," said Miss Adelaide, with a pleasant familiarity. "There, be seated while I shake hands with the earl." She hurried to Sir Humphrey and grasped his hand so warmly

that the Englishman felt his noble blood almost thrilled. She hoped Sir Humphry had been enjoying himself.

"Aw—now that's just the way everywhere we go," said Mr. Van Orden "It's 'the earl and Sir Humphry.' 'How is your lordship?' 'I hope you are well, and favorably impressed with New York, Sir Humphrey?' while—ah—not more than 'How d'you do, Van Orden, to me. I say it's an outrage—ah and I protest against it, indeed I do! The earl is everybody and I'm nobody."

Miss Adelaide was too busy attending to the comfort of the earl to hear Van Orden's complaints. An earl is such an important personage, and requires such a great deal of attention. When Van Orden discovered that he was appealing to the air, he sat down in a studied manner.

"I hope, Sir Humphrey, you have been well since I saw you?" said Miss Adelaide, seating herself on the sofa at his side.

"Quite well, I thank you, Miss Wanderburg. I cawnt say that I like Hamerica. The people bore me with their stupidity. Hamericans are wery stupid."

"Oh, I suppose so, to you who have been used only to the most aesthetic," answered Miss Adelaide. She thought that he looked fatigued, and, after fanning him a moment, asked him, with one of her most bewitching smiles, if he would not have a glass of wine.

"'Ow can I refuse when hasked by one so fair as yourself?" answered the earl. "Will you serve it right 'ere, with your own 'and?"

"Certainly, Sir Humphrey, if it pleases you that I should do so." She leaned over toward him, and her large, dark eyes were fixed on his face with earnest tenderness. The earl, for once filled with compassion, said:

"Miss Wanderburg, Hi can say nothing against Hamerican women. Hif the men are bores, there are many of

the women who should be ladies. There's one I'd make a duchess hif I could."

"Oh, Sir Humphrey, do not flatter; it is beneath the dignity of an earl." She gracefully rose from the sofa, while a soft tinge mantled her cheek.

"Hi am not flattering you, Miss Wanderburg; you are worthy to be a lady."

The blush deepened on her cheek; she laughed gayly and left the apartment to bring the decanter and glasses, as she said, with her own hand. As soon as she was gone, the Englishman turned about, and looked at his American friend. Van Orden had only time to give him an approving nod and whisper:

"Very good, very good. Keep it up, Harrison, and you will succeed," when Miss Adelaide returned with a decanter of spalrking wine, which vied with her cheeks in color.

"Now, Sir Humphrey, I will give you some of my uncle's fine old port, which has lain away in the cellar for —oh I don't know how many years."

She filled a glass and handed it to him. He held it a moment to admire the rich color, as it would not do for an earl to appear greedy.

"W'y, Hi declare, Wan Horden," he remarked coolly, "these Hamericans know 'ow to keep good wine. See 'ow it sparkles."

"Drink it, my lord, and I will give you more to admire," said the beauty.

Sir Humphrey was not hard to persuade, for he was thirsty. After pouring a second glass for him Adelaide remembered her other guest, and filled a glass for Van Orden. They became merry. Adelaide was naturally vivacious; the earl grew more talkative, and even came to tolerate "Hamericans," though he declared there were many "hasses among them."

They succeeded so well that the earl asked to come next evening and take Miss Adelaide to the opera. It took the combined savings of both the earl and Van Orden, with an additional ten dollars borrowed from Tennessee, to pay for the box at the opera, and the hire of a suitable carriage.

"Our funds are short," said Van Orden to his friend. "Make this courtship brief. You can propose to-night. Do it all genteely as an earl should. Be sure you go down gracefully on one knee. She will bear a good deal from an earl you know, ah! Make short work."

"Hi understand myself," said the Englishman, "Hi'll be the haccepted of that girl to-night, or Hi'll heat my 'ead."

They ordered the carriage at a fashionable hotel, from which the earl took his departure. This was a cunning devise on the part of Van Orden. The public might become inquisitive as to the earl's residence, and it was essential to their plan to keep Sir Humphrey Harrison and the traveling salesman separate and distinct persons.

Sir Humphrey succeeded well that night. To become the affianced bride of an earl was glory enough for Miss Adelaide. When the nobleman went down on his knees with the grace of one born and reared in foreign courts, how could she refuse? She did not appear elated. The joy and triumph of her heart must be concealed, for it was not becoming one who was to enter the splendid courts, of England, perhaps to know Queen Victoria herself, to show any undue elation. She even asked time to consider the earl's proposition; it was so sudden—so unexpected, and her heart was in such a flutter. But the earl swore he would never rise until she had accepted the heart and hand he offered. With native stubbornness the English, man pressed his suit. He knew delays were dangerous.

With white lips and a voice that trembled, she answered: 'Yes."

The earl seemed in ecstasies, and for some time held the fair creature in his arms, while they talked of queens, receptions, gallant lords and fair ladies, courtiers and glittering splendor, until her poor little head was completely turned.

That night when Sir Humphrey told Van Orden what he had done, that worthy adjusted his eyeglass and assuming a business-like air, said:

"You did well, Sir Humphrey, now strike while the iron is hot." Hurry up the wedding. Let it be secret, you know—ah. Nobody but myself and minister present You will have a plausible excuse for a secret marriage. The desire of your uncle from whom you inherit your earldom, is, you know, that you should marry a marchioness old enough to be your mother. You detest her, but must not cross the old man, whose health is precarious, and when he is dead, Miss Adelaide shall be taken to England, and before the world acknowledged your wife. She will believe you, and you must get her fast before the bubble bursts. You know what I mean? Now—ah—strike while the iron is hot!"

The reader must give Mr. Van Orden credit for some villainous shrewdness. If left to himself the earl never could have succeeded in so bold a scheme. Next evening Sir Humphrey called on his affianced, and as gently as possible broke the startling intelligence that their marriage must be secret. He gave plausible reasons, and though our heroine trembled at the step, there was something in it which sounded so much like romance, that she felt elated when informed that the ceremony must take place within a few days. The elopement and the secret marriage would all smack of nobility, and when she was

the earl's wife, and all the people came to know it, and read of it in the newspapers, what a buzz it would make. How envious the Takeall girls would be; and as to the gentlemen who wanted her,—Darlington, the Vansnouts, Muttonheds and Soffellows, they would surely hang themselves! Adelaide consented to a secret marriage.

"Now, my darling, hit must be soon—werry soon," said her noble lover.

"Next week is Christmas," she whispered timidly.

"So hit is, let us be married hon the first of the new year. Will you consent to that?"

She consented, and promised perfect secrecy.

"Were it known," said his lordship, "it might cost me my hearldom. Though Hi care little for it myself, Hi want it to make this sweet flower w'ich Hi 'ave plucked from the new world, bloom and shed sweet fragrance in the court of our good queen." His shrewder friend had put many of these fine words in his mouth. They were the chromo-lithography of sensational novels, which Adelaide thought original and exquisite.

New-years-day was selected for their elopement and secret marriage, The earl took his departure. When he was gone, heartless Adelaide wrote a hasty letter to Mr. Darlington, and enclosing her engagement ring and costly presents from her former lover in a box, and wrapping it carefully, despatched it to him. She had doffed the old love and donned the new. Standing before her costly mirror she contemplated herself a few moments with infinite satisfaction, and murmured:

"Am I really to wed a lord, and be a great lady,—bloom and shed fragrance in the courts of the kings and queens of Europe?"

CHAPTER XXV.

MISFORTUNES DOUBLING.

EDWARD DARLINGTON'S worst fears were realized. His misfortunes heaped on him, until he felt himself utterly crushed. His best friends became his enemies. In his days of prosperity, Darlington was tyrannical which made him both feared and hated. Now that they need no longer fear him, they were free to express their real feelings. He went on 'Change much as a man goes about places from habit. It was a custom he could not suddenly break. He heard the wild clamor and uproar, but no longer took part in the conflict. It was but the ghost of the former brilliant speculator come to haunt the spot of his former triumphs. He was deserted—ostracized by all. There were men there wild and excited with success and happiness.

"What, Darlington, you here yet?" asked a man who had formery been his warmest friend.

"Yes," he answered, with a wearied sadness.

"I thought you had to give up your seat?"

"I have."

"But your real estate will do something toward a settlement?"

"It is all mortgaged."

"What?" cried the man, turning quickly upon him.

"Everything is mortgaged three times over."

"Can't you pay them?"

"No,—the property will not pay first mortgage."

His former friend cried with an oath: "Why I just bought a ten thousand dollar mortgage on you!"

"First or second?" Ed asked.

"Second."

"It is not worth a cent."

The speculator turned away with imprecations on Darlington's head. The time was when he would not have tamely submitted to such insults, but he only smiled a desperate, sickening smile.

"Go, fool,—your day will come!" and rising left the place. Darlington was not one who could begin over again, when once down. He did not start at the foot of the ladder, and he could not go there now. He had inherited a fortune from his father, and with it, a mania for gambling in stocks.

But one hope was left Ed Darlington. It was that Miss Vanderburg would not forsake him in his misery. He tried to persuade himself that he really loved Adelaide. He had neglected his betrothed of late, but his manifold troubles and this ruinous crash would be an excuse. He entered his *coupé* and ordered the driver to take him home.

"I suppose it will be my last ride in my own vehicle," he said, bitterly. "Some infernal creditor will come clamoring after it, and I shall be forced to walk, or depend on a hired coach."

The *coupé* rattled on to his house, and he got out. It was an elegant brown-stone front, but he laughed mockingly as he ascended the steps.

"It is mine to-day, but gone to-morrow, like everything else; we are sure of nothing, save death. It is mine to-day, however, and I will make good use of it while I have it." He went to his study. It was a wonder of costly elegance.

"All—all gone," he sighed sadly, falling on a lounge, and burying his face in his hands. "I am a fool to give way," he finally declared, straightening himself up, and

looking as if ashamed of his weakness. "It may not be so bad as I think. If Adelaide will stand by me I can doubtless get Col. Vanderburg to advance money enough to retain my home and set me up again in business. In a few months I could make a million or two and be all right. It's only a squall; I can weather the storm yet." With an attempt at being his old self, he pressed the bell knob. A servant answered the call.

"Bring me a decanter of champagne and some glasses. I am as dry as a fish."

The servant brought the wine. Mr. Darlington was in the act of filling a glass, when there came a ring at the door bell.

"See who it is, Smith," he said, not pleased at the interruption. The servant disappeared, and returning, said:

"If you please, sir, it's the sheriff's deputy, and he says he must see you."

Mr. Darlington turned a little pale. Things had been delayed too long, he thought, but he ordered the servant to bring the officer to his study. A moment later he came back with a red-nosed man, who had a large memorandum book and some papers under his arm.

"Oh yes,—this is Mr. Jones, I believe," said Darlington, seizing the deputy's hand." I have met you before. You remember, perhaps, I was at your club once, and you made a speech a year ago at ours."

Of course, the astounded deputy remembered it. He was flattered that one should imagine him capable of making a speech. "Smith, bring more wine and glasses," said Mr. Darlington. "I can guess your business, Jones. It's disagreeableness may be obviated in this case Come, sit down, and let us tap a glass of wine before we proceed." The deputy was not hard to persuade. The

servant came in at this moment, with another decanter and glasses, which he placed on the center table. Though Mr. Darlington made a great pretence of drinking, he took little, while the deputy drank deeply. He seldom met with such a treat, and felt complimented. Not only one glass, but two bottles did he drain. They became very friendly, and sat on the sofa with their arms lovingly about each other, Jones swore he never had such a friend as Darlington. Occasionally the servants came to the door but were driven away with curses.

At last the deputy awoke to the realization of his duty. He got on his feet with some difficulty and in a maudlin voice stated his business. He had come to make a schedule of the household property under an execution against his dearest friend, Edward Darlington.

"Ha, ha, ha! why, friend Jones, that is useless;" slapping him on the back in a friendly manner. "Not necessary at all," said Ed shrewdly. He was perfectly sober, though he had pretended to drink as much as the deputy. "Now listen to me, Jones. You know we are undying friends, and you do not think I would make a false statement to you, even to save my neck—do you?"

"No—course not," answered Jones.

"Well I will go to-night and get the money to pay off those judgments. My intended uncle-in-law, old Col. Vanderburg himself is backing me, and he will advance all the money I require. Come to-morrow at one, and you shall have the last dollar your executions call for."

"Fair' nough—hic!" said the deputy.

"Will you do it?"

"Yes."

"Then good evening,—but stay, won't you have another glass of wine before going?"

"Don't—hic—don't keer—'f I—do," answers the deputy bracing himself on his unsteady legs.

The glasses were filled and drained to the health of each other and lifelong friendship. Darlington even followed the deputy to the street door, and saw him carefully down the broad marble steps. They shook hands again and the bankrupt smiled shrewdly as the drunken deputy staggered off, saying;

"G—g—good-night, Ed!"

When Darlington returned to his room, he found a package. Opening it, it he came to a small box. Somewhat surprised he raised its lid, and found the case of jewels he had given Miss Adelaide Vanderburg. In the bottom was a folded note. He read it carefully and laid it down. It was the death-warrant of his hopes, and was as follows:

"MR. EDWARD DARLINGTON.

"You will not be surprised at the return of these presents. Perhaps in your straitened circumstances you will be glad to receive them. Your failure ends our engagement, for I could not marry a man without wealth or fame. It does not grieve me much to give you up, and I am sure that you will live over it.

'Adieu.

"ADELAIDE."

Nine men out of ten would have torn the letter to fragments. He was not without his passions, though he was too shrewd to allow them to get beyond his control. He needed his wits more than ever. Overwhelmed by calamities, almost any other man would have been crushed. He had no friend to whom he could temporarily assign his property. He rose, took the jewels, put them in the elegant case and placed the case on the table. Those jewels were worth from three to five thousand dollars; a

considerable sum to many people, but to Darlington it was a trifle. He began pacing the floor.

"Misfortunes have doubled. This caps the climax. I can save only what can be carried away in eight hours."

He rung the bell and the servant appeared.

"Smith, how much do I owe you?" The fellow smiled and said he believed it was a month's pay.

"No, no, Smith, it's more than that," interrupted the master. The servant opened his eyes and gazed at Darlington as if he doubted his sanity. The servant himself concluded that it might not be enough. "I think, Smith, that I owe you and Johnson both two or three years' wages. Now, I am financially embarrassed. I can't pay you cash; but if you and Johnson are willing to take a bill of sale of the furniture in this house, I will make it out at once. You had better go and hunt up Johnson and see about it."

For a moment Smith was stupefied with amazement, but gradually the truth began to dawn. The visit of the deputy sheriff, those legal papers, and the assurance that he would come back next day to complete some business, made it all quite plain to Smith.

"I suppose when you get able you'll want to buy the things back?"

"Yes, of course."

There was no need of any further explanation. Johnson, the coachman, was hunted up and the whole matter made clear to him. In less than ten minutes Smith returned to his master, and said he had seen Johnson and it was all right.

Darlington was still pacing the floor with his hands behind him.

"Can you find a notary?" he asked of the servant.

"Yes, sir."

"Then bring one to-night by all means. Bring him within an hour, or it may be too late and you lose everything. I may change my mind, you know, and let you come in as common creditors."

Smith bowed and hurried away. While he was gone for a notary, Darlington called in Johnson the coachman and asked him how he liked the new arrangements.

"Very well," the coachman answered.

The notary came and found Mr. Darlington alone. He had drawn up a bill of sale including all his personal property, and dated it three days back. The notary took his acknowledgment to the instrument, and went away. Furniture-wagons and trucks were running all night, and when the sheriff's deputy came next day to execute his writ, there was nothing on which to levy. The house was empty and deserted, and he was forced to make his return *nulla bona*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE WONDER OF CHEMICALS.

JACK BOLIN grew very anxious to know something about the mysterious books of which the wharf-rats spoke. To find where the child had been sent, he must get the old books of the Orphans' Christian Home. It was strange that the books should have been stolen, until he heard that it was done to cover up the scandal attending the putting of an unknown baby into the asylum. The record was fatal to some good characters, therefore the books were destroyed. Rumor said the thief who stole them was so closely pursued, that he put the books in an old bag with a heavy stone, and sunk

them in the river. The books were never found, and as the illegitimate child had disappeared on the night the asylum burned, its parents were permitted to move in the best circles, without a stain on their characters.

This had happened about ten years before the opening of our story, and five or six years after Granny Gride had placed Jack's baby in the institution.

The old sailor took very little interest in these rumors. In fact he not more than half believed them. They had no connection with his mission, further than as they related to the missing books. If the books had really been dropped in the river, it would be natural enough to suppose that these "wharf-rats" should have brought them to the surface. Jack determined to know what their books contained, and though he could not play the detective himself, he procured a suitable colleague. Jake was truthful and honest in his way, and believing him trustworthy, Jack made him partially acquainted with his mission.

"Now lad, I want ye to lend a hand to an old salt," said Jack. "Where are ye goin' to stay this winter?"

"I don't know," Jake growled. "Jes 'bout where ever I get a place to drap down."

"Ye ain't got no bunk o' yer own?"

"Naw—got nuthin'. I sometimes go t' the News B'ys' Home, but oftener it's t' the station."

"Well, I'm goin' to lay in port fur a month yit, an' ye kin sleep in my cabin. I'll fix a bunk fur ye. I want ye to kind 'er lay on and off, and keep a weather eye on that craft. I must know somethin' o' them buks what they've got."

Jake gladly accepted the proposition, and that night smuggled himself aboard the little coal sloop. It was snowing; the decks of both sloop and barge were carpeted with a soft fleecy coat. Jake decided to begin his detec-

tive work at once by shadowing the barge. For three consecutive nights he made no discovery. On the fourth evening, he observed the three dock-rats go aboard the barge. A snow-storm was raging, but Jake, wrapped in an old pea-jacket, crept aboard the boat, went softly to the rear cabin window,—the best point of observation,—and waited, watched, and listened. Though he could hear but very little, he could see all that happened.

A fire of fuel, filched from adjacent coal and wood yards, was roaring in the stove. The three dock-rats were sitting about it. Burke was the only one who was talking.

"I was jest sure when I found them buks that they were the bank-buks, fur which the reward was offered. Ye see we fished 'em up in an old bag, but it was so rotten when we got it to the top o' the water, it tore open and some o' 'em dropped back. We got out but one that time, but we kept hookin' about and draggin' up an' down that part o' the river 'till we got the other two."

"What part o' the river was it in?" Duno asked.

"Right close up to the Twenty-third Street dock in East River, jest back, ye know, where the tide whirls. The big buk we found last. We got it three or four days after we found the others. It was a hundred feet out toward the harbor from the first."

"They mayn't all be the same set o' buks," said Duno. "You didn't get 'em all at the same time or place?"

"No, we got only one the first time, ye know. The bag busted open an' let some other buks, with a big stun, drap back in the water. Then we hunted about with grab-hooks fur three or four days, pullin' up all sorts o' curious things, afore we got the others. Ye see, when we got the fust one, we wasn't suspectin' any

buks were there, an' a hook got caught in the old bag they were in. When we pulled it up we thought it must be the buks o' that bank that busted on Wall Street, fur which they've been offerin' such a big reward, so we never stopped 'till we got the other two."

"I don't believe they're all the same set o' buks."

"Then they may be the bank buks yit," remarked Burke, quite hopefully.

"The others may. The ship's book may hev been drifted up there by the under-current o' the tide, ye know, and then it wouldn't be *in a bag with a big stone.*"

For some reason his face grew paler as he muttered the last words, and his voice sank to a whisper.

"How'll we find out what they are?" asked Burke.

"Didn't you say you'd more chemicals for bringin' out letters."

"Yes; when we got them buks, ye know, there warn't nothin' on 'em to read. I'd heerd 'bout a kind o' liquor as would make writin' that had faded from buks come back. Ye know they got Tom Mace fur forgery that way. I went to a druggist and got him to fix it up, as he said he knowed how, and you used part o' it the other night."

"Let's bring out all the writin'," said Duno.

'All right, I'll go and fetch the buks."

Duno watched him from the corners of his eyes, but with none of the horror he had felt at first. Burke descended the small hatchway at the rear of the cabin, and, a moment later, reappeared, dragging the bag behind him. At this moment a small face appeared at the aft window, and a pair of shrewd eyes surveyed the interior of the cabin. Burke dragged the heavy bag with books in it across the floor, and took from it the largest, which had belonged to the ship *Ocean Star*. He laid it on the

table, opening it at the place where Duno had operated the other time. It had the *Ocean Star* heading.

"Now I'll git the kimicals," said Burke. He went to a box, which, with shelves fixed in it, accommodated their poor housekeeping. On one of the shelves was a bottle and small brush. "Here they are," he said, bringing the required articles to the table and placing them by the book.

Duno shook the bottle a moment and drew the cork. Dropping two or three drops of the liquid on the book, he began rubbing it over the page. After a few moments he paused to note the effect of his work. The effect was as magical as before. The page, before the application, was yellow, and even the rulings had disappeared, but, under the stimulating effect of the chemicals, every stroke of the pen came back once more. The hand that made those strokes had long years lain beneath the waters, with sea-weeds and waves for his winding sheet; but his resurrected work stood out for future generations to read.

"What is it?" asked Burke, as he saw Duno reading the reproduced writing.

"It's the date o' weighin' anchor at New Orleans," that individual answered.

"I remember well when she sunk in the harbor. There was a fog, and she was just comin' into port with a lot o' discharged soldiers. It was 'bout the middle o' October, '65. What's the date o' weighin' anchor?"

"It says, 'Sailed October the 2nd, 1865," said Duno.

"Guess that 'ud make it about right. They may hev had contrary winds and lots o' fog. Only a few got ashore to tell the tale after the ship went down. What else is on that page?"

"OFFICERS AND CREW."

"Read 'em," said Burke.

Duno read:

"Silas Mandel, captain; John Farewell, first mate; Abel Meeks, second mate. *Crew:* Jack Bolin, Henry Mercer," and he continued to read a list of names, giving all the crew down to the cabin boy.

"Anything else on that page?" asked Burke, eagerly.

"No."

"'Spose ye try next?"

Duno applied the chemicals, and, after a moment, the head-lines stood boldly out.

"LIST OF CABIN PASSENGERS."

Although Burke had been disappointed in the book not belonging to the collapsed bank, he had grown interested in these discoveries. As for Pyke, he smoked, with very little interest in the affair.

"'Spose ye bring out the passengers' names, and we see who they were?" said Burke.

Duno swept his brush down the yellow page; pale lines, dots and graceful curves appeared.

"Now read 'em," said Burke.

"Albert Lennox, residence, Boston, embarked New Orleans, October the 1st, 1865, state-room 37. John Rose, Albany, state-room 16; Josiah Mangrave, Jersey City, state-room 23; Oscar C. Middleton, Rochester, N. Y., state-room 102," and he completed the column.

"Is that all?" asked Burke.

"No; here's some women, though not many," Duno answered.

"Read 'em," said Burke.

Duno proceeded:

"Mrs. Aurelia Vanderburg, wife of Col. Robert Vanderburg, New York City, and her infant daughter, Alice, and colored nurse Delilah; embarked at New Orleans, October the 2nd, 1865, state-rooms 206 and 208."

"Why, that was the first wife o' old Col. Vanderburg, the rich old chap. Well, he's got 'nother, so I reckin it don't make any difference. How many more women were aboard?"

"None in the cabin."

"Mebbe there were some among the steerage passengers?"

Duno put a few more drops of the liquid on his brush, and was about to apply it to the blank yellow page, when he detected a noise at the cabin window.

"What's that?"

"Nothin'," Burke answered, looking carefully around him. Pyke got up, his pipe still in his mouth, and went to the window.

"Some one was lookin' in the winder a moment ago," said Duno, trembling.

"What if they were?" said Burke. "We'nt stole nothin', and no one's comin' here to steal nothin'.

Duno was too nervous to go on until search had been made. To humor him, Burke seized a heavy stick and went out on deck. A terrible snow-storm was raging, and the deck of the old barge was covered. The night was dark and wild. The wind howled about Burke and, after trying for a moment to face the tempest, he re-entered the cabin, swearing it was the wind.

Duno, thus assured, proceeded with his work. He brought out and read the entire list of steerage passengers, several hundred in number.

There was not a woman or child among them; doubtless they were discharged soldiers.

Pyke resumed his seat and smoked his short pipe.

"This book's no good to us unless we kin sell it to some one who lost somebody," said Duno; "but may be the other books are not the same. They may be the bank-books after all."

"That's so!" cried Burke. Running his hand into the old bag, he pulled out a second book, not quite so thick or wide as the first. "Try that stuff on this," he said, laying the book down on the table before Duno.

The impromptu chemist carefully opened the badly decayed volume at the title-page, and, saturating his brush with the liquid, deftly passed it over. Burke bent over and watched him with the deepest interest.

"It's the ship's log-book, ain't it?" he asked.

"N—no—" Duno answered mysteriously. Suddenly uttering a horrible shriek, he sprang to the farthest corner of the cabin, clapped his hands over his eyes, and yelled:

"Oh God, take it away!—Throw it in the sea!—burn it! For God's sake git it out o' my sight!"

Burke gazed at him in wonder, but Pyke sat and smoked in apparent unconcern.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OLD JACK AND THE BOOKS.

JACK BOLIN was sitting in his small, dark cabin. The storm still howled about the sloop, and the snow had covered the deck a foot deep. By the constant creaking of cordage and fastenings, the sloop threatened to break her moorings. The wind whistling through the rigging

of the ships, the creaking of cordage, and dash of waves were enough to fill the soul of the stoutest with awe. The line of barges, sloops, brigs, schooner, and ships, on each side of the dock, were dancing on the waves, creaking, pulling, grating, and groaning.

Jake paused at the door of old Jack's cabin, and cast a glance into the wild night. He loved the wild scene about him. There is something in the awful which charms though it chills us with terror. Those great vessels, bounding, pulling and straining like captive giants, to break the hawsers which held them to the pier, added to the terrors of the howling storm.

Jake did not pause long at the cabin, but pushing it open, entered. Old Jack was sitting in darkness; for he had not dared to light a candle lest it might betray his secret.

"Come here, lad," he said in a whisper. Don't run afoul the stove. There's a stool on my larboard; now sit down and tell me what you know."

Jack answered:

"I raley don't know what I know."

"Ye don't? Well ye'r a curious kind o' a landlubber. Tell me what ye saw and heerd."

"I kin tell what I saw, but it's precious little as I heerd. The storm howled 'bout me wi' more racket than ye ever heerd on Calamity Row. I tuk a place at the winder o' the cabin, jest as you told me to, and tuk in the sitewation. There was Pyke doin' nothin' but smokin', and Burke doin' all the talkin', and Duno all the listenin'. I got one or two words about buks. Then Burke went b'low in the hatchway and brought out a bagful. He tuk out wan an' put somethin' on it, an' letters an' words seemed to grow out o' the pages.

"They seemed to be readin' wan fur a long time, then

tuk up another. They put some o' the stuff on it an' Duno began to read, when all to onct he seem to hev seed a ghost. He screamed and started back, and yelled until Burke tuk all them buks, chucked 'em in the bag and put 'em down in the hold."

Jack Bolin had been listening very attentively, evidently puzzled at the boy's discovery.

"Ye couldn't git under the lee o' their cabin, and work in near enough to catch the drift, could ye?"

"Naw, Jack," answered the boy. "It wa'nt no use. I did scroudge down purty clus onct, when Burke he came out wid a gret big billy, ready to fire it at me. The snow had covered up my tracks, and Burke had to turn roun' and go back in the cabin. I waited there 'till I knowed I had everything that 'ud be o' use to you, and come away. The buks are there."

"Yes, but you don't know what they are?" said the old sailor.

"Naw, I don't know nuthin 'bout 'em. The wind kept up sich a thundering noise, I couldn't hear nothin.'"

How could he lighten the mystery which overshadowed the books? At last Jack said:

"Jake, can ye get them books?"

"Git them buks," repeated Jake, with a grin. "Now yer talkin'. Guess I kin."

"Without bein' seen?"

"Ye bet I kin."

"If any o' them land sharks came on you, they'd carry you by the board."

Jake turned his eyes on the sailor, and said:

"They'd not ketch me."

"Jake; I'd like to hev them books. I don't want to keep 'em—I jest want to look in 'em, that's all. In each old hulk there may be a secret worth a mint of money."

They both lapsed into silence. The old sailor, with bowed head, was lost in thought. Within his heart there was a monitor that urged him on to the fulfillment of his life's mission. He felt that he could not lie quietly in his grave with that solemn obligation unperformed. After a long silence Jack came back to the subject.

"Jake; I want them books."

"I'll git 'em."

"You understand, now; if they catch you at it, it may git us both in trouble."

"Yes."

"If you could bring 'em here, an' let me read 'em, an' then take 'em back next day——"

"I kud do't," answered Jake, quickly. "T'morrer they'll b'gone, an' I'll g'down the hatchway an' git'm.

Old Jack retired to his bunk, and Jake, accustomed to all sorts of beds, drew two chairs and a stool before the stove, stretched himself on them, and was soon buried in slumber. All night long the storm roared, and cordage creaked and groaned dismally, while the long rows of ships on either side of the pier bobbed up and down in the darkness. The noise without did not disturb either the sailor or the outcast, who slept the sleep of innocence. The fire in the little stove burned to glowing coals, and then, for a long time, retained its steady heat. Then the coals began to fade, and the pale, fitful blazes of gas, which sometimes shot upward, became less constant. The snow crept through the cracks, forming little ridges on the floor. The warm air was driven in nearer and nearer the stove, surrounded and pressed in by its enemy.

The cold wave of air has reached the boy lying on the chairs. It assails him, and pierces his thin rags like a sharp dagger. But Jake is almost invulnerable to cold. He has lain on the streets so long, and been subject to such severity of weather, that he seems comfortable.

The dark night glided away, and when the gray streaks of dawn had driven out the shadows, old Jack awoke with a start. The first object he discovered was the boy still sleeping on the chairs, though the room had grown severely cold.

"Blow my eyes!" cried the old sailor, rubbing that portion of his anatomy, "if there don't lay that little landlubber in the cold, when he might ha' had a bunk as well as not." He rose and stirred up the coals, which had hidden themselves in fright beneath a mass of pale gray ashes. Seizing a shovel, he threw on a few shovelfulls of coal, and, shaking out the ashes below, it was not long before the whole was in a bright blaze.

Jake awoke, and washing his hands and face, helped old Jack get breakfast. At noon he saw the three occupants of the barge leave it and go off up the dock. The storm had passed; the sun shone bright and warm, and the snow was fast melting from the decks of the vessels. Jake sauntered over the side of the sloop to the barge, and when no one was watching him came to the companion way. It was locked, and though he could easily have forced it open, it was no part of his plan to do so.

He sauntered around to the rear of the cabin, and, going up to the window, looked in. The window moved on a slide, and the "wharf-rats" had neglected to fasten it. Shoving it back, he crept in upon the table, and noiselessly dropped to the cabin floor. Closing the window behind him he listened for a moment, and, lifting the trap door, descended into the hold. A moment later he emerged with the bag of mysterious books. He was trembling with anxiety and eagerness, for he knew his punishment for this crime would be very serious. The sloop's stern was almost against the barge. Jake swung the bag from the stern of the barge to old Jack, who was looking out aft of the sloop, and Jack caught it.

Jake, with some trepidation, hurried on board the sloop himself.

"Guess I'll g'up town. Don't think sea air 'grees with me," he said.

"Well, Jake; I don't know how I'm to git these back to port when I'm done readin' em," answered the old sailor.

"Oh, 'f they don't raise row 'bout it 'n a day or two, I'll come 'board 'n take the buks where I got 'em. But I guess de cops 'ill be smellin' round 'fore that time."

"I don't know," said Jack, shaking his head dubiously. "Maybe they didn't come by 'em honestly, and they'll her to keep such a weather eye out fur their own keels, they'll not have time to watch anybody else."

Jake bid the old sailor an unceremonious adieu, and went away. Jack did not dare open the books until late that night, and he kept them carefully concealed. When night came, he darkened his windows and locked the door; then laying the largest book on the table, opened it. He was astounded when the name of the "Ocean Star" met his gaze on the first page. Had the spirit of the drowned captain suddenly risen before him, he would not have been more astonished. He rubbed his chin with his left hand, while he fumbled in his jacket pocket with his right, for his spectacles.

"It's the old book," he said almost sadly. "I'd know it in any clime or weather. It's the clerk's book o' the *Ocean Star*. I guess the others are the captain's log books. I'm on the wrong track after all, but I shan't grumble at meetin' an old friend on a stormy sea."

He slowly read the name of his ship, wrecked so many years before. On the next page were the names of officers and crew, his own among the others. There was many a long forgotten messmate on the list. When he

saw the name of Joe Long, with whom he had sailed so many years, he paused, wiped his glasses, and sighed:

"Well, Joe, we've taken many a cruise on sea and land. No better messmate ever went down with his ship." His eyes wandered over the list of passengers until they lighted on the name of Mrs. Amelia Vanderburg, wife of Col. Robert Vanderburg of New York, and her infant daughter Alice. "'Blow my eyes ef she ain't the woman," cried Jack. "She's the mother o' the poor baby. Lemme see, were any more women aboard?"

He carefully searched the entire book, and closing it that with a sigh, said:

"No,—she and the baby and nigger were the only females. How well I remember that child, and how it clung to old Jack's hair as he swam ashore. That baby is somewhere, and I may find her a father in this port. Oh, if I could only find her, then old Jack could ship fur other shore where he'll be at rest!"

After many sighs, Jack rose, and hobbled to the other books, and taking one, spread it out on the table. The pages were a yellow blank. He was not astonished at this, for Jake had told him that the letters were faded away, and required some kind of liquid to bring them back.

Laying this book aside, he took up the third. Opening it at the first page, he bent over to spell out the heading, and uttered a shout of joy. Before him was the book of the *Orphans' Christian Home.*

The remainder of the page, not having been anointed with the stimulating chemicals, was blank, but Jack could get that wonderful mixture and restore the writing. Clapping his hands in glee, he danced about on his wooden leg, crying:

"Oh, blow my eyes,—ain't this a jolly day for me! My mission's a'most done!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SECRET MARRIAGE.

CHRISTMAS passed like a gay dream to the expectant bride. By advice of the earl and Mr. Van Orden, she went a great deal into society. Never was Adelaide Vanderburg more beautiful. The bare name of nobleman is a passport to the confidence and hospitality of the best families, and too often, as in the case of Sir Humphrey Harrison, it gives a currency to the worthless.

What American could have imposed on our intelligent community as this dull adventurer had? Although Van Orden was shrewd enough to plan and conduct the fraud, he never would have succeeded in the execution. It required one from that small island across the sea, to assume the rôle of nobility. Miss Vanderburg was happy in the thought of her coming nuptials, but it was only the joy of triumph. There were the Takeall girls who would barter twenty years of their existence to be called "lady." There was Mrs. Lillie Bunkles, the gay young widow who had taken the fashionable world by storm, she would be willing to suffer cremation for the honor. It had always been Adelaide's ambition to be the wife of a lord.

The earl had made her no presents as yet, not even a betrothal ring. As their marriage was to be kept secret it would have been bad policy for her to wear a betrothal ring. He promised her jewels in abundance when they went to Hengland.

"Lady Harrison," she said, as she stood before the mirror in her dressing room, turning from side to side to

get a better view of herself. Now she adjusted this side of her dress, and then that, and turned about, admiring its fit and the plumpness of her shoulders. Mist-like sleeves which covered her arms, seemed only to reveal their roundness and beauty. "Lady Harrison,—oh, it will really be true!" and she stood on her tip-toes and looked over her shoulder in the glass to get a view of her back. "They'll open their eyes. Won't it be a nine days' wonder when it all comes out!"

She walked off a few paces, then stopped, placed her arms akimbo, tip-toed and turned about, and tip-toed again, alternately examining each side. Although her maid had dressed her with the utmost care, for it was the first day of the new year, she had determined to criticise herself and had dismissed her. There could hardly be a more beautiful bride. Her dress was white satin brocade, square cut corsage, trimmed with Spanish lace draperies. In front was a row of glittering pearls. She wore, a diamond necklace, and a bouquet of orange flowers pinned at the left side of her waist, which, with a cluster of precious stones in her hair, gave richness and splendor to her beauty. Her little feet were encased in the most delicate white slippers. She was dressed for her wedding. Having admired her costume to her own satisfaction, she reclined gracefully on an easy cushioned chair.

"I ought to tell uncle," she said to herself in a half remorseful manner. "I ought to tell both. This is treating them with disrespect. An elopement,—for it is nothing less—and they are kind in their way. But no; he commanded me to keep it a profound secret, and I will not disobey my husband, the earl. How grand it sounds,—my husband, the earl. Uncle and aunt will forgive me when they learn I have married a real live earl."

She rose, trying to believe she was happy. The basest of deceptions is when we try to deceive ourselves, for within there is ever a witness to the lie.

While the bride-elect sits in her boudoir on this New-year afternoon, with the house closed to all callers save the earl and Van Orden, let us for a moment look after the bridegroom. He is in his small, cold room at the end of the hall, and has just attired himself in his best raiment. His dress is superb, of the finest broadcloth, "swallow-tail" coat, low cut vest, and tight fitting trousers. His broad shirt front glisten's white, and sparkles with diamonds so like the genuine as almost to deceive an expert. The Englishman's hair was combed and puffed, and a broad path ran up the center. His whiskers were brushed and perfumed until he thought he must in reality be an earl. A great question had arisen which neither he nor his friend could solve. They could raise, as a joint fund for the occasion, only twenty-five dollars. Fifty might suffice, but twenty-five would not. They must have some money immediately. The earl dared not draw on the funds of the heiress before she was his wife.

"Oh 'ow vulgaw," said his lordship, biting his handsome lip with vexation, "to think a nobleman should be so hembarrassed for money on 'is wedding day."

"I think we can borrow some," said Van Orden.

"From 'oo?"

"From that doctor called 'Tennessee'."

"Well," said his lordship, with a sigh; "Hi don't care to hassociate with such vulgaw people, but if you can succeed hin negotiating a loan with 'im I'll not hobject."

Mr. Van Orden ran down the stairway to the floor below, on which was Tennessee's room, rapped, and was admitted. Never did a more smiling face greet the South-

erner. He shook his hand, and sat down for a moment's social chat. Then he jumped up, ran and closed the door and came back, taking a seat still nearer, chatting pleasantly, and then got up and poked the fire, asking Tennessee if he was not cold, and paid more than one nice compliment to the Southerner. The doctor, surprised, laid aside the book he was reading, and fixed his dark brown eyes in astonishment on the man before him.

"By the way, my dear Dr. Stonebeater," he at last said, having sufficiently prepared his victim, "I have a small favor to ask of you."

"Wall—what is it?" asked the Southerner, taking his feet from a chair, to elevate them to the table. "I 'm allers willin' to do 'most anything to help people."

"I knew you would," said Mr. Van Orden, with a little laugh. "Nyther my friend nor I doubted that you would. I have learned if you want an accommodation to go to a Southern man. They are so warm-hearted. But oh! for Gadsake deliver me from a cold blooded Northerner."

"Ef ye' ll tell me what ye want, Mr. Van Orden, I' ll be shore to tell ye whether I kin help ye or not.

"Well, Mr. Harrison is about to get married, you know, to a wealthy young lady in the city—"

"Say, feller,—is it that gal with fat arms and shinin diamonds, what I saw ye with at the Opera?"

"Yes—yes," answered Van Orden, uneasily. "Ahem—yes—she is very wealthy."

"What on airth is she gwine to marry him fur?"

"Love of course,—love at first sight. You know Harrison is a fair representative of a noble Englishman, and he's such a fine-looking fellow, that he carries the hearts of the young ladies by storm—"

"Wall, she's a drivin' her ducks to a pore market, shore.

I don't keer though. 'Taint nuthin' to me. Does he expect to keep her in shinin diamonds and silks by peddlin' tea over town?"

"Hush–sh!" whispered Van Orden in a little flutter of alarm lest his friend's occupation should become kuown to the fashionable world. "That, you know—ah! was only a joke. My friend Mr. Harrison will be above that to-morrow."

"Wall—n—no; I don't think a man kin git above honest work o' any kind, but I don't know 'bout a tea-peddler marryin' a millionaire."

"Where they really love each other, doctor—where it is an affair of the heart, what difference does it make?" said Mr. Van Orden, in an earnest, soothing manner.

"None ez I kin see—if it's all squar' an honest. I think Harrison's a sorry stick at best; but if that gal's fool enough to want him, I ain't got no objection."

Mr. Van Orden hardly knew how to proceed. But desperate cases require desperate treatment. Something must be done, and be resolved to launch at once into the subject. Plucking up his courage he finally broke forth.

"To-day is Harrison's wedding-day, Doctor, and he is short of money, and it's caught me short too. We want twenty-five dollars."

"I'd think ye'd be bringin' back the ten dollars ye bor rowed o' me a month ago, afore ye come back to git more," said the bluff Tennesseean.

"Oh, my Gad, Doctor!" cried Mr. Van Orden, holding up his hand in a deploring attitude. "You don't know how much I regret not being able to repay you—but—ah–really, you know, this is so sudden upon us, you know. My friend is in real distress. His wedding-day has come, and I have promised to stand by him, you know. If you would only let us have twenty-five dollars, we'd both sign

the note, and to-morrow we'll get the bride to sign it too."

"No you won't," said Tennessee, heartily disgusted. "Here's the money, and I want no note, for I never expect to see a dollar o' it agin. I would n't go back on a nigger if it was his weddin' day." He took from his purse the requisite amount and putting the money in Van Orden's hand, said: "There, take it an' go; if it helps bring misery to a Vanderburg, its money well spent."

With many smiles Mr. Van Orden left.

At dusk a close carriage drove up to the mansion of Col. Vanderburg. Mr. Van Orden sprang out and hastening up the steps to the great front door, rang the bell. It was answered by a servant in livery.

He waited in the parlor. A servant carrying a lady's square dress-trunk on his shoulder passed down the hall and out at the door. Others went by with trunks and traveling bags. They kept still tongues in their heads. The luggage was put in a wagon which stood just behind the carriage. In her boudoir Miss Vanderburg was penning a note to her uncle and aunt, a duty which her conscience had at last forced her to perform. This done she gathered up her jewels, and stuffed her *porte-monnaie* with bills which her uncle had given her that morning; a sight that would have delighted the earl and Van Orden.

In a few moments, wrapped in seal-skin and furs, she descended to the parlor. The dainty silk arctics concealed the delicate white slippers, and her jewelry case, and *porte-monnaie* were hidden under her cloak. She was conducted to the carriage where sat the earl, gloomy and sullen. The carriage rattled away and the wagon with its baggage followed.

In the suburbs of the city, at a small church, the carriage halted. The occupants got out, and silently entered.

A minister was there. It was now dark, and a solitary gas jet near the altar, dimly lighted the vast apartment. The trembling bride wondered whether romances of this character would pay. A somber and seemingly prophetic gloom pervaded the farther end of the chapel. Those deserted pews, dark aisles and pillars, all looked terrible in their solemnity. Poor Adelaide felt as if she was under the influence of some awful spell. The hand which clasped hers was so cold it could not possess any love. She was sacrificing herself to her ambition, and she little dreamed what the nature of that sacrifice was.

The minister wore a long white beard. He read some passages from the Bible in a deep solemn voice, which scarcely reached her deadened senses. Through all the ceremony she acted like one in a dream. They left the church and she found herself crossing Hudson river, and entering a railroad depot. Twenty minutes later, the pretended earl and his deceived bride were aboard a fast train bound for Chicago.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"A MODERN INSTANCE."

FASHIONABLE society was shocked at news of the elopement and marriage of Miss Adelaide Vanderburg. At first, people were not certain with whom the deluded girl had eloped. They could only surmise from recent attentions of Sir Humphrey Harrison that it was he. When it was too late, society discovered it had been imposed on. The pretended earl was only an adventurer, an English cockney, whose vulgar manner's and uncouth language ought to have betrayed him. It was

only the hallcuination of nobility which blinded people. Society has been guilty of many blunders, but seldom of one greater than this.

Lord Soffellow was still in New York, and was appealed to when the question of Sir Humphrey Harrison's title to nobility was under discussion. He took the trouble to write to the earl whose nephew Sir Humphrey claimed to be, and received a cable dispatch in reply that the man was an imposter. But the mischief was done and could not be mended. The villain had captured one of the fairest belles and richest heiresses in the city. Col. Vanderburg took the matter much to heart. Adelaide was the only representative of his family. Alone in his room he shed bitter tears over her awful fate.

There was one desperate man who heard of the elopement and secret marriage with infinite satisfaction. It was Darlington, her ruined and discarded lover. All the bitterness in his soul was roused against the beautiful being who had forsaken him in his adversity. The tongue of scandal had ceased to prate of his downfall, and this new sensation was seized upon with avidity. He was among the first to learn that the earl was a fraud. In the mean apartment to which his straitened circumstances forced him, he lay upon the couch kicking his heels against the wall and laughing with intense delight.

"Ha, ha, ha, ha! it was for this tea-peddler she discarded me, was it?" he cried, throwing away the morning paper which contained the latest account of the affair.

Mr. Darlington read all this with grim satisfaction. In his soul he detested the ruined girl. The enterprising reporter had not been able to ascertain the whereabouts of the bride and groom. Mr. Van Orden not having been seen since the elopement, it was supposed that he

had accompanied the runaway couple, and that he and Harrison were reveling in the luxuries that the well filled purse and jewels of the bride could procure.

"She has chosen—ha, ha, ha!—the fool!" said Darlington, "chosen a tea peddler. Oh I wish I could see her in her humiliation! I should gloat over her downfall as she gloated over mine. I hope the proud old gouty uncle is miserable. He deserves to be for allowing me to sink, when he could at any time have put out his hand and saved me."

These gloomy reflections recalled another matter to his mind. That matter was a source of consolation to him. He had received comfort from but one person. He took from his coat pocket a dainty envelope addressed to himself in a ladylike hand, and drew therefrom a perfumed missive. This he received a few days before, and if it had quickened his pulse and flushed his cheek no one had been the wiser. He read it now for perhaps the twentieth time:

MR. EDWARD DARLINGTON.

DEAR FRIEND,—Do not be cast down. The whole world has not deserted you. I will ever be your warm *friend* in adversity as well as prosperity.

"ROSA V."

The sight of the missive put a new idea in his head. He went on linking idea to thought until he had evolved a new plan. It was nothing uncommon, in fact it was a frequent modern instance, one that is likely to occur as long as villainy and folly clothe themselves in a semblance of respectability and power.

"Others have done it in desperate straits, and why not I? Men have fled from shame and financial disaster with wealth and beauty before. In fact it is the modern idea to take advantage of a woman's weakness and vanity. I will do it."

He drew a chair to a cheap stand, and taking from the drawer some note-paper, drew his fountain pen, and wrote the following lines :

"DEAR ROSA V.—In my loneliness and misfortune it is sweet to find one heart true. I must have your sympathy, I must be with you and gaze in your eyes again. If you can pardon this overflow of the heart's warmest affections, and will grant me an interview with you, I can explain what I mean

Your loving *friend*,
EDWARD D."

"That is putting it rather strong," he said, with a chuckle, "It will be a tester. If she grants the interview, then I'm not mistaken—I can go on ; or, if she flies up, she can't hurt me."

Sealing the missive, he addressed it to "Mrs. Rosa Vanderburg," and not daring to trust it to the mail, despatched it by his faithful servant, Smith.

"It is done," said Darlington, throwing himself on the couch ; "the ball has been set in motion for a desperate game, society mocks me in my misery and laughs at my ruin ; but I shall be revenged on society. I know it is wrong, but I am desperate. It will be no more than a score of bank cashiers have done in the last dozen years."

Smith came back and awoke Mr. Darlington from a pleasant nap. He rose with a smile, rubbed his eyes and yawned as though about to engage in the most honorable and agreeable business, and took the answer from Smith.

"That will do, Smith," he said, "you can be excused for the present. Remember, Smith,—" and laying his finger alongside of his nose, Mr. Darlington smiled and added, "mum is the word."

Smith nodded and disappeared. Then Darlington opened the dainty envelope and drew out the missive. It was brief, but beyond a doubt was all he could desire.

"I am lonesome now, and would be glad to have your company. I will be alone in my parlor this evening.

ROSA."

"It works like a charm," he said, with sardonic satisfaction. "Yes, I'll give the papers a new sensation. They spent three weeks on my ruin, and three more on Adelaide's elopement with the tea-peddler,—now they shall have a whole month to digest a well-regulated scandal."

He was in high glee. His keen eyes sparkled with more vivacity than they had since his Wall Street downfall. That evening he went plainly attired, in order to excite the sympathy as well as admiration of the beautiful though foolish woman.

Critics blame novelists for drawing such characters as we present in this chapter, and still they require of us a certain degree of realism. These characters and incidents exist in the warp and woof that go to make up the stories of human existence. Somewhere, either in the background or by-play, they directly or remotely form a connecting link in the story of almost every life. Blame such characters and unpleasant incidents, but not the author.

A faithful domestic in the confidence of her mistress admitted him, and he was conducted without ceremony to Mrs. Vanderburg's private parlor. His only friend and sympathizer was there to meet him. She grasped his extended hand and they were soon engaged in a low and earnest conversation. They sat before a cheerful wood fire. He sighed and looked melancholy, and she poured out her warm and not unwomanly sympathy upon him. One, two hours passed, and they were still alone. Sometimes the conversation lagged, and then an awkward silence fell on both. He sat gazing into the fire and she

tapped her small foot on the carpet. He was gathering up his courage for a fearful leap. It would seal his doom let the decision be either way. At last she broke the silence:

"What will you do, Mr. Darlington?"

"I hardly know," he answered; "two paths are before me. One is bright and full of happiness; the other, filled with gloom and despair. Shall I tell you what my visions are?" he asked, gazing fixedly into the fire, as though he saw them there.

"Oh, do!" she cried, laying her small hand on his arm, while her large, soft eyes met his.

"I see before me a path which leads across the continent, over rivers, mountains, valleys and plains, to the land of gold and of promise. I could go there—I could live there, in opulence and happiness. But there is an obstacle. That obstacle is, that the only *friend*, that, during my darkest hours, whispered a word of comfort in my ear, is now tied down to a crabbed, crusty old miser, whom she cannot love. I see myself with her, flying away to this new and delightful world. Now we have reached the land of gold. We have a happy home, and grow rich and powerful.

"The other vision represents a scornful refusal. There is a dark pier in the background. A body is floating away from it—drifting out to sea—"

He paused, and looked at her. Her eyes met his. Oh, the strange, startled look! Would she assent, or would she refuse? She cast a frightened glance toward the door.

"We are alone," said Darlington, interpreting her thoughts, and hoping to alleviate her fears. She turned her white, beautiful face upon him. He met her with an irresistible gaze.

"You understand me, Mrs. Vanderburg?" he whispered in her ear. "You know full well what I mean. Now, once and for all, do you assent? We are past the time for child's play, and lovers' nonsense. Will you make the leap?"

There is always a nervous horror about the first sin. The first step in any crime is taken with a great deal of fear and trembling. This was not only a step—it was a leap down into a great dark abyss. Suffice it to say, that Darlington went away from the Vanderburg mansion, smiling in triumph. He would succeed.

Two weeks later Mrs. Vanderburg gathered up all her jewels, and with a large amount of cash taken from the husband whom she was wronging, eloped with Mr. Ed Darlington. The detectives traced them to Omaha; but there lost the trail and were not able to hear of them again.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BETROTHAL.

To turn the gaze from the shame and false love-making of Adelaide Vanderburg and the pretended earl, or the criminal attachment of Darlington, to the honest, pure love of Fred Saunders, is like turning the eyes from perdition, to the abode of the blest. He did not think his parents would approve of his marriage to a girl, be she ever so lovely, that knew nothing of her parentage. Her birth, to say the least, was suspicious. What was he to do? There were the old obstacles, which incessantly occur in heedless attachments. His position in life—the prejudices of the society in which he moved—his

dependence on a parent who might prove proud and unyielding—all forbade him to think of matrimony; but when he looked down upon this innocent being, so tender, shy, and confiding, he saw a purity in her manners, a blamelessness, and a beseeching modesty in those lovely blue eyes, which touch his manhood. Fred became restless; he lost that ardor as a student which had placed him foremost in his class. He would wander about Calamity Row for hours at a time, in the hope of catching a glimpse of that being whose purity and gentleness had won his soul.

Fred had entered the little shop several times of late. The weather was delightful for January, and he seemed to take great pleasure in wandering past the little establishment on Calamity Row, and frequently dropping in on one pretext or another. This time he wanted to purchase some trifle, but he knew his real object was to feast his eyes on the lovely face and figure of the shop-girl. She was on this occasion dressed more simply, and yet seemed more charming, than usual. Her dress was a delicate dove-gray serge, made plain, with very little ornament or trimming. Her golden hair hung loose in wavy masses about her shoulders. The slight flush of pleasure at sight of Fred, almost betrayed a secret dearer to her than life. She heaved a sigh a moment later, and wished he was away. Mrs. Joyce, misinterpreting Allie, made it convenient to be in the rear apartment so that they might be alone. Allie had thought much on the subject which had grown vital to her, and resolved to treat Fred with coolness, much as it pained her heart to do so.

"What do you wish to purchase?" she asked in a cool and business-like manner. He turned his eyes full upon her, and there was a gentle rebuke in that look of pain. For a moment he struggled with himself, but love

gaining the mastery over pride, he said, in a very gentle voice:

"That green tie if you please." She put her small fair hand in the show-case and brought out the green tie which she proceeded to wrap in paper for him. Fred never stood on questions of price. The whole affair was so cool and business-like that Fred grew cool himself.

"Is there anything more?" she asked, in a business-like manner.

What a world of meaning she had unknowingly embodied in her short question. He was almost staggered at the significance of the query. His answer involved eternal weal or woe. He had reached that strange turning-point in a man's existence where a word will echo a lifetime. If he said no, and went away, he should never perhaps see the face of the being who had been so attractive to him. He hesitated a moment, when the truth, like a gushing fountain, voluntarily asserted itself.

"Yes, Miss Gray, there *is* something else," he said. He spoke so earnestly and yet so tenderly, that Allie lost her self-control. She flushed and paled, trembling so violently that she had to lean against the counter for support, and began nervously folding down plaits in her clean white apron. She dared not risk herself to ask him what. The moment her eyes met his, they drooped beneath his earnest gaze, and a gentle flush bloomed in her face. He bent over the counter and almost whispered in her ear: "Yes, there is something else I want. I want to talk with you—I must tell you something. When will you be disengaged, some evening—when I can come?" She could only stand with downcast eyes.

He repeated his request, and urged her so strongly that, bewildered and confused, she whispered: "Next Monday, —half-past eight."

It was sufficient; Fred was gone. The die was cast, and his fate sealed. Society, position, and every other obstacle had been swept away by one resolution. His mother would forgive him, and if his father removed him from college before he received his degree, he could work with his hands.

No sooner was he gone, than Allie came out from the spell his presence had produced. Had she detected herself in crime, she could not have been more mortified and alarmed. A few moments later, when Mrs. Joyce entered the store, she found her fair employé in tears.

"Why, Allie, my child, what has happened?" her employer asked.

"Oh, don't ask me, Mrs. Joyce,— don't ask me," she sobbed, "I cannot tell, but I fear I am doomed to hopeless misery." She ran from the shop to the rear parlor, and Mrs. Joyce anxiously watching her, said:

"The heartless villain has deceived her, poor child. Well, he'd better not show himself about this shop again." She resolved with the anxiety of a mother to keep an eye on the young man.

With a prospective breach of promise action in mind, she took her place just outside the parlor door on Monday evening, to listen to "every word he uttered."

Fred's face was pale but there was a desperate calmness about it. Allie noticed his pallor when he entered the little room, and asked him if he had been ill.

"I have been troubled with headache," he answered. Fred hoped he might get from Allie some assurance of her sympathy, but she was strangely cold and indifferent to his suffering.

He had seen her soothe the most acute sufferings of a wounded stranger; why had she no word for him? Why did she sit there and gaze into the glowing grate. Her composure seemed bordering on indifference.

"Allie, what have I done?" he asked.

She started, and, trembling, answered: "Nothing, I hope."

"Then some one has been talking of me?"

"No—no—" she stammered, that calm exterior broken, "I have not heard a word against you, Mr. Saunders."

"Something must be wrong." he said, rising to his feet, and taking a step toward the door.

"What can be wrong, Mr. Saunders?" Allie asked, her voice trembling in spite of herself.

"I don't know—you are so changed—so cold—so different from what you have been before that—I—"

He paused, and fixed his eyes on her pale, pleading face. It was silently entreating him to spare her, and yet the secret could not be hidden. He hesitated but a brief moment, and then at two or three quick strides was at her side. Before she could comprehend what he was about, he had seized her hand in his, and his hot breath was on her cheek as he began wildly:

"Forgive me, Allie, if I have been wrong!—if I have deceived myself and deceived you,—but I must know the truth. At times I have hoped that you felt the same as I do. At other times I have been discouraged. Do not blame yourself if I was wrong in my feeling for you. Never by word or deed have you encouraged me." He paused a single moment, for her lips were quivering and her breast heaving tumultuously. But she was silent, and he went on, "Oh, Allie, forgive me—I come to-night to tell you—I must tell you, that *I love you!*"

"Oh don't, don't, Mr. Saunders," she cried, starting up, and shrinking from him. But somehow he still held the little hand captive, though she struggled to withdraw it. Her voice was not loud, but its sweet cadence was enough to melt a heart of stone.

"Forgive me, Allie," he gasped, struggling manfully with his emotions. "If I have wronged you, I will on my knees implore your forgiveness. If it is wrong to love you tenderly with all my heart, soul, and manhood, then I have committed a most heinous sin."

"Mr. Saunders,—you know not what you say," she cried, hiding her face behind the hand that was free but ceasing to struggle for the freedom of the other.

"I assure you—I do, Allie; and it only requires your consent to make our betrothal complete."

Their betrothal? Did he mean it? Was he in earnest, or was it only a snare set for her feet? She had been taught to regard beauty as only dangerous to a girl in her station of life. She knew how wily the tempter was, and how soft were his snares. Oh! if she only dared hope he would prove true!—In her devout Christian heart she loved Fred Saunders as she had never loved another; all her soul was centered in him, and he had for months dwelt in her fondest dreams; but this sudden avowal was overwhelming! Her better judgment had fought against her rebellious heart; for she knew the difference in their stations. But, as in Fred's case, the heart was about to triumph over reason. She still struggled feebly as the poor bird flutters in the hand of its captor.

"Oh! Mr. Saunders," she sobbed, "you cannot mean what you say. Think of the difference in our stations; think how unworthy I am of you!"

These were the first words of encouragement Fred had received. He was almost in ecstacies. Venturing to place his left arm about her waist, he said:

"Answer me Allie,—do you love me?"

"Oh do not—do not force me to answer."

"I must,—It is very easy," he gently said, drawing the drooping figure toward him. "Yes, or no? only one word—"

"*I do*," she whispered, after a long hesitation. He drew her close to his breast, and then for the first time that beautiful face, radiant with blushes, beaming with smiles, and yet damp with the tears of love, appeared to his view. He still kept the hand a prisoner, and drawing her face to his, pressed a kiss upon her lips. All the pent up love which she had striven so long to keep down seemed to burst forth ; and with passionate tears in her eyes, she flung her arms about his neck.. She clung to him fervently, as though she feared he was but the shadow of a dream and might vanish. "Oh, my darling, she murmured, "how I have struggled against this, because I thought it was not right."

"Why is it not right?" he asked, leading her to the settle, where they both seated themselves, their arms about each other. "Why is it not right? God has ordained that man and woman should love. A pure, holy love is as near God as we can approach in this world."

"But—but, I—I am not worthy," she sobbed, once more breaking down. He drew her head again on his breast, and in the softest accents responded.

"It is that am unworthy of you, my angel—well, I am only a man, and not a very good one either. You are my superior in everything that is pure and good, and will always be my pride and joy."

"You do not realize,"—she said, as some horrible recollection forced itself between her and happiness, "I am—a shop-girl."

"Do you think that can be an objection to our mar riage?" he asked, with a smile. She nerved herself: she must conceal nothing. So trembling as if in an ague fit, she whispered:

"Yet, you do not know all—you shall know all.—*I am a foundling!*"

He only smiled and drew her closer to him as he replied: "I have known that, and considered it well, my dear. I love you—I love you—that is all sufficient. I care not what you may have been. I am miserable without you; your birth is no crime of yours."

"Oh my darling," she cried with joyful sobs—"I am so happy." Once more she entwined her arms about his neck, and their lips met again and again in the outpouring of love.

Mrs. Joyce, who had been a fascinated listener just outside the door, rose from her place of observation and crept up the narrow stairway, to her bedroom.

As soon as Allie had somewhat recovered from the emotion which had overrun her reason, she fixed her eyes on the face of her betrothed, and said:

"What will your mother say? Dare you tell her?"

"My mother knows all," he answered, "I received a letter from her to-day, in which she says, she will love her son's wife, let her birth be a mystery or not. And you will love her; she is so kind and so good."

"I know I shall—I know I shall," she sobbed, wild with joy.

Fred remained late in the small back parlor. The hours seemed to the lovers but fleeting moments. It was midnight before he thought it ten o'clock. When he parted from Allie, a band of gold encircled her forefinger. All the world seemed bright and gay to Fred as he went along the street. Though it was the silentest hour for Calamity Row, yet the somber street seemed as gay as if lighted by a noonday sun. The city was to him all splendor. Never before had he seen the stars shine so brightly. The moon in the center of the sky above, filled the city with radiance.

The clouds had cleared away from his mental sky, and he was happy, happy, very happy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SEQUEL TO JACK'S STORY.

FRED had written to his mother, told her all, and received such a reply as only a mother can write. But he wanted to talk with one that knew Allie and could appreciate her excellent qualities and rare beauty.

He met Dr. Morey a day or two after his betrothal, and they walked down the street together. It was a pleasant day, almost warm as spring. The snow had disappeared and the streets were nearly dry. Fred told the Doctor of his engagement in a plain straightforward manner. Dr. Morey listened in silence. He seemed to be partially prepared for it, and evinced no surprise. After Fred had finished, he said:

"Have you carefully considered everything?"

"I have," the young man answered.

"Are you sure you realize what is before you?"

"I do, doctor. I fully understand the situation; I have not plunged into this matter blindly. The step has been taken after months of careful deliberation. I know very well what my friends and the public will say; I know that many an aristocratic nose will be turned up at my nameless shop-girl wife. But let them completely ostracize me if they will. Happiness is the chief end of man's existence, and if I can be happier as a hermit with Allie, than I could as chief magistrate of the nation without her, am I not wise in marrying?"

"But—but—" began the doctor, in that timid, hesitating manner with which a person usually approaches a delicate matter, "do you understand about her birth?"

"I know all that any one knows. She is a foundling. I have considered the worst—the very worst—and chosen."

The doctor was silent. Surely a love that could overleap pride in this way, was not to be trifled with. After a few moments, however, he again said:

"Have you consulted your parents?"

"I have told my mother the whole truth, and she, just as a good mother always does, decides in favor of her son's happiness."

"Fred Saunders," said Doctor Morey suddenly, grasping his hand, "you are a noble young fellow. Young men that follow the dictation of the heart, and trample pride and ambition under foot, as you have done, are rare. When I meet one, I feel as if I had discovered a diamond in the heap of rubbish we call humanity."

"And I have discovered a living fountain of happiness in the shop-girl of Calamity Row."

They walked on in silence. Dr. Morey was thinking how little Fred understood the great task before him. He could, in the present flush of inexperienced manhood, defy public sentiment; but if he could see the long years of stubborn combating with ostracism and isolation, would he not relent? would he not think the step too great even for his firm, strong love? Happily, the endless struggle was concealed from Fred by that mystic veil we call the future, through which not even the eye of the philosopher and sage can penetrate.

These reflections of Dr. Morey were put to an end by some one shouting to them from across the street. Looking in that direction, he saw a wooden-legged sailor whose cap and jacket were so coal-begrimed as hardly to be recognizable. He was hailing them in a familiar manner.

"Helloa, shipmate,—lay to a moment, till I come alongside; I 've been cruisin' round two days for you."

The voice was familiar to Fred; it startled him from a reverie both painful and pleasant, to see old Jack Bolin limping across the street to meet him.

"Why, Mr. Bolin, I am glad to meet you," said Fred, extending his hand to the crippled sailor.

"No—no—no Mister, if you please, messmate;—jest plain 'Jack;' I 've sailed under that so long I couldn't think o' any other now."

After Fred had introduced him to Dr. Morey, Jack continued:

"I 've been cruisin' about trying to find ye, shipmate. There's a seekel to that yarn I spun to ye, and I want ye to come aboard my sloop and read it, fur it's written out thar before me."

Fred laughed and said: "Jack, have you gone to story writing and do you want us to criticise your productions?"

"No, shipmate,—I' m good at handlin' the tiller and mendin' sail, but I don't never touch the pen. This yarn and the seekel hez become so clewed to my mission, that one must convoy the other all along the voyage."

"Who has written the story, then?" Fred asked with some little curiosity."

"There's been several at it," said Jack, fetching a hitch at his trousers. "Some o' em hev gone to Davy Jones; and some are perhaps alive. Its in reglar book-form and runs through 'bout three volumes, but you kin read all you need to in a few minnits; come aboard with me and I kin explain it to ye: 'tain't hed a very wide circulation I reckin."

Fred said that they better go, and the doctor, anxious for anything that would take his mind off Fred's affairs

consented. They followed the old sailor down to the dock where lay the sloop. They all went aboard, and entered the small cabin where sat three rather unprepossessing individuals whom we can recognize at once as Burke and Pyke, wharf fishermen, and Duno the confidence man and beggar.

"These men are all in it," said Jack. "They go to make up the seekel o' my first yarn; and these," laying his hand on two large soiled ledgers, "are the books which contain the story and the seekel. Now this volume," laying his hand on the larger, "contains the story; and these," touching the smaller books, "the seekel. This man there is Burke. He's a wharf-rat, as we call 'em, and that's Pyke his pardner," continued the old sailor, pointing first to one and then the other of these worthies. "They fish in the river and harbor about here, and git many curious things besides fish. These books they got by accident on their hooks and brought 'em up, some two or three months ago, and they 've got my story and the seekel in 'em."

Jack Bolin had roused the curiosity of Fred and the doctor to the highest pitch. They urged him to go on.

"This," continued Jack, opening the largest volume, "is one o' the ship's books o' the *Ocean Star*, ye know. I told ye about my ship goin' down in the harbor and so many gittin' drowned. It has all the passengers, and sailors and officers who were on the *Ocean Star* when she went down, and they show there warn't but one white woman and one baby aboard, as you'll see. That's the baby I saved and the woman I lost. Now here are their names," and he pointed to "Mrs. Aurelia Vanderburg and her infant Alice, destination, New York."

"Good Heavens!" cried Fred, in amazement, "the infant you rescued is the child of Col. Robert Vanderburg,

the millionaire, whose second wife deserted him, and whose niece eloped with the English cockney."

"Keep quiet, Fred," said the doctor, "there is something in this, and it's our duty to investigate it."

Old Jack stood by the book in proud triumph. He felt that his mission was almost done. "This book has the seekel," he said laying his hand on one of the smaller volumes. "They were fished out o' the water by these men, and the letters were all faded away, but a drug clerk gave us somethin' to bring back the ink. I guess, shipmates, you find that proves Old Jack's yarn to be true, don't it?" nodding at the ship's book which Fred and the doctor were examining.

"Your narrative undoubtedly has the best record testimony to substantiate it," answered the doctor.

"Now, shipmates, ye remember I said I landed and put the child in the hands o' old Nance Gride, and went back fur the mother; but I was run down, had my leg crushed, and laid most a year in a hospital, too near dead to do anything, and that I found Granny Gride only last fall. She had put the child in an orphan asylum, and so lost trace of it. The asylum books had been taken away and throwed in the river, and the building was burned the same night. This was done, I've found out, to cover up the whereabouts of an illegitimate child o' somebody's. These are the books, and there's the man who took 'em." He pointed to Duno, who shrank into one corner and kept his face averted.

"Them books got him in a little spell o' bad weather, and he's rather shy o' 'em. Well, now, we come to the seekel," added the sailor, opening the first of the smaller ledgers. "Jest step here and read, will you?"

Filled with curiosity, and feeling very much as if it was all a romance, Fred Saunders stepped up to the book, and saw on the yellow title-page:

"THE ORPHANS' CHRISTIAN HOME."

"Now, then, read this, too," said the sailor, turning over the yellow, soiled leaves near the central part of the book. With some difficulty Fred read:

"Entered on this 1st day of November, 1865, one unknown female infant, about a year and a half old, with blue eyes and light hair. Brought by Nancy Gride, who says it was given her by Jack Bolin. Parents not known."

"That is certainly the baby," Fred remarked; "but can you trace it no further?"

"Yes, shipmate; but blow my eyes ef I can get it to port. Here's the second one o' them books, which has somethin' o' it." He took up another volume of the same size as the second, and laying it on the table, opened it at the third page. "Jest read, please." Fred did so:

"The child left by Nancy Gride not being called for—parents not known—is taken by Mrs. Margaret Sniffles, wife of Isaias Sniffles, to rear as her own."

"Why, I know those people, Jack," cried Fred, somewhat excited; "I can take you to them at once, and you can find out what became of the child." Fred at once concluded that one of the three daughters must be the foundling. All three had blue eyes, and either Miss Gracey or Miss Dolly might be of the right age. "I have seen the child, no doubt."

"No you ain't, shipmate,—don't cast anchor until you are in port," said Jack, shaking his head sadly. "When I come to that readin' I thought I'd 'bout got to the end o' my mission, but this is only an island. Port's not in sight yit."

As he spoke his busy fingers were fumbling the yellow,

faded leaves of the old record. At last he came to the place for which he was looking, and laying it open, said,

"Read."

Fred and the doctor together read:

Dec. 1st, 1865.—Unknown child taken by Margaret Sniffles, wife of Isaias Sniffles, returned."

"That is very unfortunate, Jack," said Fred, who was momentarily growing more interested.

"Yes, there's 'nother place where it speaks o' the same child."

"What does it say?"

"They named it somethin', and somebody took it away.

"Those are very important clues," said the doctor, thoughtfully. For the last few moments he had been studying the face of Burke, and had partially lost interest in the unfolding mystery. It seemed as if that face had been familiar at some long-forgotten period and the sight of it awakened unpleasant recollections.

"I'm huntin' for the place now," said the sailor, again fumbling the yellow leaves of the old, half-rotted ledger. He turned them with care, for they were so decayed that there was danger of tearing them to pieces.

"These records evidently had an index at one time," Fred remarked. "If we had it now it would greatly facilitate matters."

"Guess we ain't got such a thing aboard," said the sailor, still turning the leaves. "These are all they fished up. Well, here it is—here's the place," said old Jack at last, turning to a page and pointing his finger at it. Dr. Morey took a step nearer the sailor, and looking over his shoulder, read:

"*February 28th*, 1867.—*Child taken and returned by Mrs. Margaret Sniffles, wife of Isaias Sniffles, named by the Orphan's Christian Home Society Allie Gray, taken from asylum by Joseph Ruggles, cobbler.*"

"What?—what?—what?" cried Fred, staggering forward as if some one had dealt him a blow.

"Be quiet," whispered the doctor; "for heaven's sake, Fred, be quiet."

"Tell me, doctor," Fred gasped, as if breathing had become difficult, "have you read that right?"

"Yes, yes."

"Is it true?"

"It must be. Sit down and be quiet."

"What is it?" Fred asked in a confused way, sinking into a chair and wringing his hands in a wild manner. He seemed to believe himself in a dream.

Dr. Morey asked the sailor a few questions, and drawing his note-book and pencil, began to write. Fred could only sit and stare at him in a stupefied manner, hardly seeming to comprehend what it all meant. The doctor went over the three books very much like a lawyer gathering up record testimony. He made up notes from them, thus completing the chain of evidence. Light broke in on his mind, and he nodded his head knowingly.

"These books are valuable," said the doctor at last with decision.

"But the baby—" began the sailor, who had been too much astonished to get in a word.

"It will be found," answered the doctor; then turning to Burke, he looked him in the face a moment and, advancing, asked:

"Are you not Anthony Burke, the man that used to supply the medical colleges, in 1865 and 1866, with subjects for dissection?" Burke stared a moment at the doc-

tor—"I know you. You brought to me the body of a young woman for dissection, who had a singular mark on her arm. It was a star and a crescent. Are you not the man?"

"I—I—expect I am," Burke gasped, too much amazed and frightened to speak anything but the truth.

For a moment the doctor silently gazed at the man before him, as if his keen grey eyes would pierce him through, then he said, slowly and solemnly, "Did you not get the body from the river, near where the *Ocean Star* sank? You need not fear to acknowledge it, for it is too long ago for the law to trouble you."

"I did," he stammered, after a moment's hesitation.

"A short time after the wreck?"

"It wasn't more than a week."

"There's money in this, Burke," said the doctor, earnestly. "There's money and no danger. Tell the truth, and tell it manfully. Don't you know she was one of the drowned passengers from that vessel?"

"Well," he muttered, "I expect she was."

"You remember we did not use the subject, and hired you to bury the body; could you find the grave?"

Again he seemed to shrink within himself, but, as visions of reward came to his mind, he conquered his timidity and answered:

"Yes."

CHAPTER XXXII.

FROM DESPAIR TO ECSTACY.

THAT evening, Fred and Dr. Morey were closeted in the apartment of the latter. A great change had come over our hero's face. Dr. Morey, as usual, was grave and

cool. He maintained the air of a philosopher accustomed to making discoveries, and not at all elated at this.

"Doctor," said Fred, "I can hardly believe it is real.'

"It is," said the doctor, lighting a pipe and emitting clouds of smoke. "It is no dream, Fred, no romance, though it sounds like one. I do not wonder at your being confounded; you got in your work in good time, my boy. The girl is worth four millions, beyond a doubt, and of as good a family as lives."

"Do you think, doctor, that I would hold her to an engagement made when neither of us knew her real position in the world?" Fred asked.

"No, I don't think you would; but I think she will hold you; if she doesn't, I must confess I don't understand Miss Allie Gray, *alias* Alice Vanderburg." For a moment Fred struggled, was silent, and then said:

"Doctor, do you really believe that the body brought to your dissecting room so many years ago, was Col. Vanderburg's wife?"

"I think it very probable now. But somehow, at the time, it never occurred to me, though the newspapers were full of the disaster."

The doctor continued to smoke in silence, and Fred puzzled himself with the problem whether this was real or only a fancy of his romantic imagination.

"Doctor, in what way is Tennessee connected with this mystery? Don't you remember his strange conduct on the night you told the story of the star and the crescent? What did he mean?"

"I don't know," the doctor answered. "It is a thing unaccountable to me. Perhaps it will all be explained."

Both relapsed into silence, and for a long time sat gazing into the glowing coal fire in the grate. The doctor smoked out his pipe and sat a long while gazing into the fire.

"Fred, we have got to do something," he at last said, without removing his gaze from the grate.

His young companion started from his reverie and answered, with a laugh:

"Have we taken to dreaming?"

"There is no time for dreaming. Upon one of us devolves the task of going to Col. Vanderburg and making him acquainted with this discovery. I understand he is partially recovered from the last sad blow—his wife's elopement—but the matter must be carefully handled. The question is, who is the proper person to break the news?"

"You are, doctor," said Fred. "Your cool judgment and long experience as a physician will be of great assistance in this delicate task."

After another silence the doctor said:

"Yes, you are right; I think I had better attend to that. I see no reason to prevent both from going, unless his family physician should think otherwise. We will first call on him and reveal all; he had better go along."

"I presume it would be best," said Fred. "We should be refused admittance without."

Next morning, Dr. Morey called at Mrs. Billington's boarding-house for Fred, and asked Tennessee to accompany them. He agreed, but not with the faintest idea of the real object of the journey, and they set out for the office of Col. Vanderburg's physician.

"Have you told him?" Morey asked, with a nod toward Tennessee, who was ambling along behind them, gazing into the doors of the houses and into the faces of many of the pedestrians that hurried by. The Southerner still retained much of his native rusticity.

"No—I told no one," Fred answered. "I have strictly followed your advice in the matter."

"That is right. He will know all at the right time," said the doctor.

The wind had shifted round to the northwest, and the day was severely cold. Sharp blasts met them at every corner, and pierced them to the bone. They hurried along with their overcoats buttoned up to their chins. They hailed a passing car and entered. On reaching the doctor's office, Dr. Morey and the Vanderburg physician talked a long time together in a low, earnest manner. Fred, whose bewilderment was not entirely gone, and Tennessee, whose amazement can be better imagined than described, sat at a little distance. They heard the Vanderburg physician occasionally giving vent to exclamations of wonder and surprise, as the story was related to him. At last the narrative concluded, and Dr. Morey, elevating his voice so they could hear him, said:

"Do you think we dare break it to him?"

"Yes," the New York physician quickly answered. "It will do him no harm, and in fact I think will do him good. I will trust you, Doctor, to make the revelation You have sound discretion in such matters; exercise it.'

"But you must accompany us, Doctor, and see that your patient is in a fit condition to receive the information."

When Tennessee found that he was to be taken to the Vanderburg mansion, for some unaccountable reason he rebelled. Swearing that he would see the Colonel in the infernal regions first. Dr. Morey took him aside and after a long, earnest talk which puzzled Fred, Tennessee consented; so they all set out for the house of Col. Vanderburg.

In his own apartment, reclining on a couch, was the wasted form of the once robust Robert Vanderburg; wasted not so much by any perceptible disease or age, as by some obscure cause.

The chronically morbid condition of his mind had produced physical derangement. The recent double shocks, falling on one whose life was almost a wreck, had really less effect then they would have had if he had been in full strength and pride. While Fred and the doctor were consulting with his physician, his nurse was in his apartment watching the grave face. For some time the Colonel gazed out at the window; at last he asked:

"Has any one heard from Adelaide yet?"

"No, colonel,—do not think of her."

"Why?" he asked mournfully," I have no one else to think of. Poor Adelaide has done wrong. But I must not see her suffer."

"You will forgive her, then?"

"I will not see her suffer when I have so much at my command."

At this moment the door bell rang. A servant came to the master's apartment and announced the doctor and three gentlemen.

"What does he bring men with him for?" the invalid asked. "Some business to be transacted, I suppose; well, admit them, and we will see what can be done. The doctor would not allow them to come unless it was important." In a few moments the gentlemen entered the invalid's room.

"Well, Colonel, you are looking better," said the physician, with the freedom of a family doctor, "I am glad of it, for I brought these gentlemen to tell you some good news."

"Good news!" repeated the invalid, raising his haggard face and hollow eyes to the doctor. "What good news can come to me? Some of my stocks gone up to increase my burden a few millions? My renegade wife heard from,—coming back with all her shame and disgrace, to

drag me to my grave? My foolish niece returning with her adventurer, that they may await my death and wear my shoes?"

"No, no, Colonel; we have no news from either source. This is really good news. Do you suppose you can bear it?"

"I think so,—I have borne so much bad news; I guess I can endure a little good."

"There is more in this, Colonel, than you think," his physician said. "I want you to be brave, Col. Vanderburg—not that there is danger; but be brave against joy. This will be so overwhelming that I almost fear to let you know it."

"What can it be?" the invalid asked, his eyes growing brighter with newly awakened interest.

The doctor felt his pulse and gave him a gentle stimulant to strengthen his nerves.

"You recognize Dr. Morey, do you not? he asked.

"Yes, he's the physician who so kindly bound up my wounds the time I was hurt on Calamity Row."

"He knows something that will please you, Colonel," said his physician, carefully. "It is no vain, delusive hope, but a reality. He has the recorded testimony to prove what he will tell you."

As the eyes of the invalid grew brighter; Tennessee, who had not been introduced, sat gazing at him, his own face expressing many emotions. The invalid turned his eyes on Dr. Morey and said, feebly:

"If you have anything that would interest me, I am willing to hear it."

Dr. Morey and the family physician exchanged glances, and then the former said:

"I hope you are prepared for a surprise, Col. Vanderburg."

"I am prepared for almost anything. My nerves are so deadened that it would fall harmless on me, be the shock ever so great."

"Permit me," began Dr. Morey, in a very calm manner, "to preface my revelation with a few questions, that we may understand everything fully as we go along."

"Ask whatever you please, I have no secrets now," the invalid answered.

"Your first marriage was in the South during the war was it not?"

"Yes—I was a Colonel in the Union army stationed at Memphis, Tennessee, in 1863, when I was married."

"Your first wife was a Southern woman?"

"Yes sir, and her father was an officer in the Confederate army," he answered calmly. "There was a strong partisan opposition to our marriage."

The invalid was apparently calm, yet his eager eyes betrayed inward excitement. Tennessee became restless.

"After your marriage, your regiment was transferred to New Orleans?"

"Yes."

"There you had a child born?"

"We had; it was a girl. I remember her large blue eyes, and how her sweet baby fingers would pluck at the brass buttons on my coat. But I left my wife and child at New Orleans when I was transferred to the Shenandoah Valley, whence I came to New York to be mustered out of service."

"And your family?"

"They started to come to me. The vessel was wrecked in the harbor by a collision, and went down. There was a great fog which prevented many being saved. My wife and child were lost with the others."

There was a moment's silence. Tennessee brushed a tear

from his eye. The doctors exchanged glances, and the Vanderburg physician nodded for Dr. Morey to proceed.

"Do you know, Colonel," said Dr. Morey, slowly and carefully, "that a child was rescued from that vessel?"

"No; impossible! I never heard of one being rescued. If it had, I should have known it—I advertised—Oh, no—don't say that—don't!"

"Be careful, Col. Vanderburg," said Dr. Morey. "We told you to be prepared for a surprise such as you could not imagine. We cautioned you."

"I know, I know—"

"And you said you were prepared for anything," added the family physician.

"Yes, but not that—not what you are hinting at—Oh my God, it can't be so!"

He was growing so much excited that his physician thought Dr. Morey had better desist. But the Colonel at once forced himself to be calm and urged them to go on. "I am now prepared even for that, and the suspense is more trying than the revelation would be."

"Yes, yes, go on! go on!" cried Tennessee, in a manner that puzzled Fred, but which the doctors seemed to understand. "Don't stop, Doc, 'till ye've told it all from beginnin' to end; I'm shore he kin stand it if I kin."

Dr. Morey, however, would not proceed until fully notified by a nod from family the physician.

"Do you think, Colonel," said Dr. Morey, carefully, "that you could endure the information that an infant had been rescued from the steamer?"

"Yes," the Colonel answered, making a desperate effort to be calm.

"Well, Colonel, there was a child rescued by a sailor named Bolin."

"I cannot believe it," said the Colonel, struggling with

his emotions. "If that be true, why was I not informed of it before? I advertised in every paper in the city. I offered rewards for the bodies of my wife and child, but never a trace of them could be found. The survivors of the wreck knew nothing of them. Don't raise false hopes Doctor;—I have suffered enough spare me that torture.

"I raise no false hopes, Colonel," said the doctor, very calmly. "I have not said the child was yours. The sailor did not know the name of the child, nor of its mother. He brought it to shore and put it in the arms of a miserable, ignorant woman, named Nancy Gride, and went back to rescue a woman whom he had left on a door tied fast to a buoy. His boat was run down by a tug, and he was so injured that he lay nearly a year in the hospital, unable even to speak of the child he had rescued. The woman left on the buoy was drowned. The sailor knew not whose child he had rescued. He tried to find Nancy Gride, but never succeeded until about three months ago. She then told him that, not hearing from him, she had put the child in the *Orphans, Christian Home*, which was burned about ten years ago, and the books of the establishment stolen and thrown into the river."

Dr. Morey paused to note the effect. The Colonel was very much excited. A strengthening cordial was given him, and after a few moments he said: "There can be no doubt about the child's being rescued?"

None whatever, Colonel," the doctor answered. "The sailor is ready at any time to make an affidavit to the facts I have stated."

"Well—well," sighed the invalid, hopelessly; "what joy can that be to me? The sailor does not know whose child it was?"

"No; if he had known he would have told you long ago."

"Then you have only cursed me with a doubt. The child may be mine or may not. Is that joy?"

"Wait, Colonel," said Dr. Morey, very calmly, taking from the inside pocket of his coat the note book in which he had written the memoranda from the old records. "About two or three months ago two fishermen were in a boat fishing near the mouth of East River. Their hooks become entangled in something which they drew up. It was an old canvas bag which had in it some large quarto record books. The weight of a large stone which was with them tore a hole in the bag and let some of them fall back into the water. Under the impression that the books were valuable, they secretly dragged that part of the river, and recovered two more volumes. One of them was the register of the ship *Ocean Star*, containing a a list of all the passengers, officers, and crew, aboard on her last fatal voyage. There were but one white woman and one infant aboard. They were *Mrs. Aurelia Vanderburg and her infant daughter, Alice; bound for New York.*"

Dr. Morey paused, for Col. Vanderburg, unable longer to contain himself, was on his feet. "Don't ask me to be calm," he cried. "How can I be?—I never dreamed it could be thus. My child lives—the child that for seventeen years I have mourned as dead. Oh, God be praised! You need not tell me she is not—You know where she is. Take me to her at once; you would never have come to me with this much of the story if you had not known all."

The physician urged him to be calm, and they would not proceed until he was so. Yet toward the conclusion he was wild with joy. Tennessee broke down and wept like a child. Dr. Morey told all, even to the spot where the mother was buried. He concluded with:

"That sweet, pure, lovely girl in the shop at Calamity

Row, who attended you so faithfully and tenderly when you were injured, is your own daughter."

Notwithstanding all their caution, this was too much for the invalid. With a sharp cry he swooned. The doctors sprang to his aid and Tennessee wrung his hands and wept for joy.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A GENERAL CLEARING UP.

It is night, and the large parlor and drawing room of the Vanderburg mansion are all aglow with splendor. The gilded chandeliers have been lighted, the awning has been stretched across the pavement, and a carpet spread up to the door, just as if it was the eve of another great ball. The lamps beneath the awning are lighted, and liveried servants moving about with the importance belonging to servants on a grand occasion like the present. In the parlor, sitting by the side of Dr. Morey, on a sofa, is Col. Vanderburg, looking many years younger. He is richly attired, and his laugh rings out with more genuine merriment than his domestics had ever heard in it before. Old Stephen, the butler, shakes his head mysteriously, and declares it is not all right. The mansion has been hastily prepared for a reception. This reception is to welcome home the Colonel's long lost child,—to elevate a pure, spotless maiden from the poverty and the dangers of Calamity Row, to her birthright of wealth and position. Fred Saunders has gone to break to his betrothed the joyful news, and the family carriage is to call for them at a certain time to bring her to her father. Messengers have also been sent to summon Jack Bolin, Mr. and Mrs.

Sniffles, Mr. and Mrs. Dempster, Horace, Burke, Pyke, Duno and the three books, Joe Ruggles and wife, Jake, Mrs. Joyce, and even Granny Gride. In addition to these, the Colonel has his legal adviser present and a few of his most intimate friends. The Colonel, in profound yet well controlled emotion, was talking with Dr. Morey.

"My child, my own child whom I had not seen since she was an infant, until that day," he suddenly broke out—"Oh, I loved her then. She is coming. Well, well, the house has waited long for its rightful mistress; now it shall be prepared for her; I will make amends for all she has lost in a life of misery and poverty."

Our friend Tennessee, who had been sitting in a facorner of the room engaged in conversation with the Colonel's family physician, came forward, and, seating himself unceremoniously in front of them, began in his characteristic way:

"I say, fellers; I guess ye think I'm a fool, don't ye? But ef ye'll listen to me, I kin tell a leetle more o' this yarn, which aint a sorry one by no means. Ef the Colonel here knew I was David C. Stonebeater, the little brother o' his wife, he could understand it. I was only twelve years old, durin' the war, when the Colonel come to our neighborhood with his regiment, and run my father and his regiment out o' the country. He come to our house and was very kind, but mother couldn't forgive him fur bein' an invadin' Yankee. My sister Aurelia loved him, and when he left the neighborhood fur New Orleans, she run off and went with him. It was never known fur certain 'till years after that they were married. Father and mother both died without knowin' it, an' never furgive their gal fur elopin' with a hated Yankee. The war driv us into the Cumberland mountains, and it was a long time before I heerd o' my sister bein' drowned.

She hed a birth-mark on her arm like a new moon with a star in the center, and when the doctor described the body in the dissecting-room, I knowed it was her. Col. Vanderburg, though my parents never furgive ye fur bein' a Yankee soldier and 'stealin'' the best and noblest gal that ever lived, I will."

The warm-hearted Southerner, with tears in his eyes, extended his hand to the Colonel, who took it in silence.

The servants are beginning to receive guests. First, a carriage rolls up, and Mr. and Mrs. Sniffles alight. Too much astonished to speak, they are conducted under the brilliant awning to the door of the grand mansion. Mrs. Sniffles imagines herself in a fairyland, and her shrill, sharp voice is awed into silence by all the grandeur of the occasion. She is dressed in her best; for a visit as an invited guest of the millionaire had never entered into her fondest dreams. Her husband at her side can only stare in blank, owl-like amazement. They are taken to the reception-room and seated in the grandest apartment they have ever seen. Next come the minister and his wife; then comes Mrs. Joyce—and Mrs. Sniffles feels her indignation rising. Did they, in this invitation, intend to classify her with the common herd. A few moments later old Joe Ruggles and his wife enter.

Mrs. Sniffles can contain herself no longer, and whispers in her husband's ear: "I shouldn't wonder if that disgraceful Allie Gray didn't come poppin' in next. If this is to be the best of New York society I will quit it," she wrathfully avows, in the same shrilly uttered whisper, so close to her husband's ear that no one save he could hear the threat.

Amazement sits on the brows of all. No one understands, or can even surmise, for what purpose they have been called together. Their astonishment exceeds all

bounds, when old Jack Bolin, followed by Burke, Pyke, Duno, and Jake enter. A few moments later old Granny Gride hobbles into the room.

The last carriage to arrive is the family coach of Col. Vanderburg. It contains Fred Saunders and Allie. He has told her all, and her bewilderment is beyond description. They alight, and she sees the same awning, the same lights and liveried footmen she saw on the night of the grand ball, when she was driven away by the policeman, as though she had been a thing to contaminate the grand lady. Was this really her home, and was she to meet a father here; one whom she had never known and of whose existence she had not dreamed an hour before? She leans heavily on her lover's arm and trembles, and tears course down her pretty cheeks, as she trips along at his side under the awning. She whispers:

"Oh! can this be true? Is it not a dream? It seems too strange to be real. Your love—this discovery, all—all seems too strange."

"Miss Vanderburg," says Fred, desperately, "believe me, when I say that at the time I sought your hand in marriage, I did not dream that you were a millionaire's daughter——"

"I know it—I know it," she answers, in a whisper, which trembles with her excitement and emotion. They had almost reached the carpeted steps, and Fred had only time to stammer:

"Had I known, I would not have dared." She was silent. Was it because there was no time to answer, or might it not be fhat she preferred to be silent on the subject? Did she regret her betrothal? Now she might be wooed by the richest and greatest in the land. The poorest and weakest have their ambitious dreams.

"This way, my lady. You are not to go to the recep-

tion parlor, but to Col. Vanderburg's apartment," said a servant, as they ascended the steps.

Allie looked very pretty in her neat, but by no means costly or elaborate toilet. Bewildered, confused and only half-conscious of what was really going on, she was conducted to the most elegant apartment she had ever seen. Dr. Morey, Tennessee, and several other gentlemen whom she did not know, rose and bowed to her as if she was some great lady. An elderly gentleman, whose pale face was flushed with excitement, came forward. She recognized him at once as the man that had been wounded by the runaway, at Calamity Row.

"My child—my child!" he sobbed, taking her in his arms. She did not swoon, but her brain was in a whirl; she was in a semi-conscious state, and seemed to act mechanically. A few moments later she found herself sitting on a sofa by her father's side, and talking happily.

Already she felt within her heart a new emotion—a daughter's love. There was a legal looking gentleman present who, with Dr. Morey, was carefully examining some large, badly decayed old books. She could not understand what it meant, but some one said they were a ship's register and the records of an orphan asylum, fished up out of the river.

The lawyer occasionally paused in his work of examination to ask some question of Dr. Morey, or to make some entry in his memorandum book. Then old Jack Bolin, whom she had never seen before, was called in the room to tell his story, which the reader has already heard. He concluded: "Messmates, I've made it my life-mission to find that baby. I promised its mother, when she lashed it on my back, that I would take keer o' it, and I must find it. The doctor said it was in port; where is it?"

"You shall know in due time, my good man," said

Mr. Blanchard, Col. Vanderburg's attorney. Jack was then told to be seated in the room with these strange, fine people; much to his embarrassment, he complied.

Nancy Gride was next brought in. The attorney cross-examined her very closely as to what she did with the child given her by Jack Bolin; only eliciting the one answer, that she had put it in the "Orphans' Christian Home." At last they got through with her and sent her back, and Burke, Pyke, and Duno were examined separately. The two fishermen told substantially the same story. Burke was very voluble and Pyke reticent, as usual, but there was no contradiction in their accounts. Duno was the hardest witness to manage. It required all the tact of the attorney to get from him the story of the stolen books, but he wormed it out after all. Mrs. Sniffles was next summoned. She paused in astonishment to see an elegant drawing-room converted into a court of inquiry. She elevated her nose slightly at sight of the bewildered shop-girl from Calamity Row, sitting there by the side of that rich-looking old gentleman.

"Did you ever take a baby from the 'Orphans' Christian Home?'" the attorney asked.

"Yes, sir," was the answer, in tones very sharp and shrill.

"At what time?" asked the attorney.

The answer corresponded with the date in the register.

"What did you do with it?"

"Kept it a month or two, and took it back. It cried of nights and would not let us sleep."

She was asked to describe the baby, and she said it was an ugly little creature, with blue eyes and light hair.

Mrs. Dempster remembered the baby; she was only a little girl herself then, but she remembered that it had the most beautiful blue eyes and golden hair she had ever

seen. Its face was inexpressibly sweet, and she thought it a very pretty baby. The oral testimony thus far corresponded with the records of which the witnesses evidently knew nothing. Joe Ruggles, when brought in, stated that he had taken a child from the "Orphans' Christian Home." It was a girl, with blue eyes and golden hair. The date he gave corresponded with the date in the register, which he had not yet been permitted to see.

What had he done with the baby? He had reared her as his own until she was old enough to get employment, and then she went into the shop of Mrs. Joyce.

"Where is that child?" the lawyer asked.

"There she is," the cobbler answered, pointing to Allie.

"Blast my eyes!" said the sailor, starting up and coming over to the bewildered girl. "My mission's over! The baby's found, but she ain't no baby now at all. Oh, little gal," in his enthusiasm seizing her hand in his, "ye don't know how much I've suffered since ye've been lost sight ov. I'll never furgit that awful night when yer ma lashed ye to my back, and made me swear I'd never desert ye until I got ye safe in port. This is yer father; now yer safe and I'm ready to embark on my final voyage.

Tears gathered in those weather-beaten eyes; he sank down on a seat and sobbed.

The examination as it had been planned by the lawyer, was completed.

Col. Vanderburg had all his witnesses and guests assemble in the drawing-room and taking Allie's hand, said:

"This is my daughter. Her strange story you have heard in parts. Put those parts together, and you have a chain of testimony which no court under the sun could

reject. But there is still stronger evidence; my heart tells me this is my child. Those who befriended her in her hour of distress and almost squalid misery—thank God—I am able and willing to remunerate. My honest friend, Joe Ruggles, the cobbler, shall be cobbler no longer. He and his good wife are pensioners on me for life—and—you shall all be liberally rewarded——"

The Colonel had over-estimated his strength. He was forced to sit down, and his physician gave him a stimulant. The sailor rose to his feet and started toward the door.

"Where are you going?" the invalid asked.

"To my sloop," was the answer. "My mission's over and I guess I'll go aboard."

"No, no, my good man; you'll go aboard that craft no more. You shall have a good berth for life. Let me see," the colonel added feebly, for he was yet very weak; "I will make you captain of a new yacht I am to have built. You will have a first-rate crew, and a salary of five thousand a year as long as you live."

With a gasp old Jack sank down as suddenly as if he had been struck a blow. Had he been declared king of Great Britain it would have been a small honor when compared to this. When informed that six months' pay would be given him in advance, and that he was to live with his employer until the yacht was built, he could scarcely believe himself awake.

Pyke, Burke and Duno set their services at three thousand dollars each, and they were paid the next morning.

"Well," the sharp, shrill voice of Mrs. Sniffles was heard to say, as she hurried across the room where the Colonel and his daughter sat, "this is your daughter, Colonel Vanderburg?'

This is my daughter, madam," the Colonel answered, politely, yet coolly.

"I am so glad you have found her. Oh, I am so glad. I've known her so long, and we always loved her."

"Ya-as," echoed her husband, joining her, "we always loved her so."

Alice was silent. Her father interposed at once, and said: "Thank you, good people; I will remunerate you for the information given. A carriage is at your disposal whenever you wish to return home. My daughter is fatigued."

Mrs. Sniffles was chagrined. She elevated her nose to its highest altitude and sailed out of the room with her husband.

Alice Vanderburg was shown to her room by a chambermaid. At her earnest request Mrs. Joyce remained to pass the first night with her in her father's house. Mr. Dempster and his wife were urged to call frequently. Old Joe Ruggles and his wife were kept nearly all night in the Colonel's room, telling him anecdotes of Alice's childhood. The Colonel gave Granny Gride some money to increase her stock, more on account of her utter helplessness than anything else.

Jake, the pest of Calamity Row, was taken at once into Col. Vanderburg's employ, but he did not retain the boy long. The lawyer who had the lost books of the Orphans' Christian Home, began looking up the illegitimate heir, to destroy the identity of whom the asylum was burned. With the aid of Duno and the books it was no impossible thing. The child proved to be none other than Jake, the nameless waif of the streets. The parents were found, and to escape exposure, made the nameless, homeless orphan a neat present in the sum of fifty thousand dollars. Dr. Morey was appointed Jake's guardian. He

took his ward and the money with him to his western home. Jake is now a bright young fellow of eighteen, and at the head of his class in one of our western colleges.

Tennessee remained with his brother-in-law, and the next morning was introduced to his niece in his true relation. Alice soon learned to love her warm-hearted uncle in spite of his rude, uncouth manner.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.

THREE months have passed since Alice Vanderburg, still called 'Allie' by old acquaintances, entered her father's house. She now regards it as much her home as she did the little back parlor in Calamity Row. The great house awes her no longer. Its vastness, the depth of its windows, its glittering magnificence and costly furniture, all have grown homelike and friendly.

She accepts her good fortune modestly, and resolves to improve by it. Many great ladies have called on her, or sent invitations for her to attend private parties, but she has resolved not to enter society for at least one year. During the interim she determines to improve her mind as best she can. Her father has employed the best private tutors, and she is a quick and willing pupil. She visits Mr. and Mrs. Dempster frequently, but makes few new acquaintances. For some reason Mrs. Sniffles was left off from her list, and that lady's ambition to enter the portals of fashionable society will probably never be realized.

Fred has not seen much of his betrothed since she

assumed her new station. He has been in the most miserable period of his existence. His honor impels him to release Miss Vanderburg from vows made when neither dreamed she was other then a nameless shop-girl. But to give her up would be like sundering his life. He had long talks with Dr. Morey, who, while he thought it well for Fred to offer to release her, felt confident that under the circumstances she would not accept the proffered liberty.

"It would be well," the doctor finally concluded, "to see her father and lay the whole matter before him. She has probably told him before, but neither of them would mention the subject to you. The Colonel is a very sensible man, and without a doubt when he finds you trying to do a manly part, will only refer you to his daughter. With her I am sure your case is safe."

Fred was not so certain. A leap from poverty and obscurity to the inheritance of four millions might turn as strong a head as Alice Vanderburg's. The papers had been full of her romantic story, and she was described as being beautiful beyond comparison. The very fact that she received no visitors, seemed to whet the curiosity of fashionable people.

It was now the middle of May. A wonderful improvement was perceptible in Col. Vanderburg. He had grown almost stout, and his cheeks had the flush of health. He frequently rode in the park with his daughter, in their landau. Then every eye was turned to catch a glimpse of that lovely face.

The Colonel's brow was not entirely clear of clouds. His niece had been heard from but once. Harry Van Orden had returned to the city, and from him a rumor went forth that Adelaide and her husband had left Chicago for some western city on hearing that the

Colonel had found his daughter. One day while reading his morning paper he noticed a sketch clipped from a San Francisco Journal. The headline attracted his attention.

"DEATH OF A WALL STREET MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO.

Last night a young man who has been living for four or five months in this city under the name of Williams, but whose true name turns out to be Edward Darlington, was shot and mortally wounded in Dick White's gambling saloon. The quarrel which resulted in the tragedy was over a game of cards. Darlington *alias* Williams, was an adventurer, as his dying confession shows. A year ago he was a Wall Street broker, but lost all in trying to crush one of the great speculators. He eloped with the wife of another broker, and came here with her, where they lived a month or two as man and wife. But when the money she had stolen from her injured husband, and her jewels were gone, he deserted her and she committed suicide. An account of her death was given in our columns at the time. The coroner will hold an inquest over Darlington's body to day."

Col. Vanderburg removed his glasses from his eyes, neatly folded the paper, tore it into strips and threw them in a waste basket near his side. Thus ended the story of the woman whom he had tried to love, but who had disgraced him. There was just a little of the old painful look in his face and he could not repress a sigh, while his eyes grew moist. At this moment the door bell rang, and the servant came in with the card of Fred Saunders.

"Bring him up," said the Colonel, glad of anything that would take his mind from this painful train of thought. Fred came into his room, and seizing his hand with a heartiness to which he was a stranger a year before, the Colonel said;

"How are you, my dear fellow? I had come to the conclusion you had deserted us."

"Oh, no, Col. Vanderburg far from it!" said Fred, with an effort to be cheerful. "I have come—perhaps—for an honorable discharge."

"Discharge, my dear sir, what do you mean?" asked the Colonel in amazement.

"I have come to talk with you, Colonel," said Fred, striving to be calm. "I mean to be very frank."

"Well, well, is there another mystery? You western gentlemen seem to have a wonderful tact for bringing mysteries to light."

"This is no mystery; though it may possibly be news to you."

"Go ahead then, and I shall be able to determine."

"Before I knew you, or even suspected that the lovely girl on Calamity Row was your daughter. I became acquainted with her in a rather romantic manner. I admired her quiet, unassuming beauty, and when I came to know her I loved her." Fred's voice sank almost to a whisper; but he mustered up his courage and resumed: "I, believing her to be poor and nameless, determined to give her my name. Then I dared love her, I proposed and was accepted; we were betrothed, Colonel, but I did not know who she was, I—that is—" Poor Fred broke down in helpless confusion.

"Well, sir," said the colonel, as coolly as if he was discussing some business affair, "was your engagement broken off?"

"No, no—not yet."

"But you wish it, do you?"

"Oh no, Colonel,—you don't understand me," stammered the youth.

"Well, sir, make yourself plain. The sooner I under-

stand exactly what you desire, the sooner I can aid you."

"To be plain with you, Colonel," said Fred, with an effort to be calm, "I loved your daughter then with all my heart, and I love her yet. But when I won her her condition was different from what it now is. I then hoped to give her a name and raise her to a position better than she had hitherto enjoyed. My means and position compared with yours, are little, but I could have given her a happy home. As it has turned out, she would have to descend to me, instead of I to her. As an honorable man I cannot hold her to her compact. It is my duty to release her, or give her the privilege of releasing herself from our engagement."

"Young man, you have come to me with a matter that wholly concerns yourelf and my daughter."

Fred's heart gave a great bound.

"I am to understand, Colonel, that if she is willing that the engagement should stand, you have no objection?"

"I shall not object nor interfere. If Alice loved you before, she does now; and I would not for a moment think of sacrificing my daughter's happiness for all the foolish ideas people have of stations."

Fred was happy. He sought an interview with Alice as soon as he could, and if one had been able to get a view of them as they sat upon the velvet sofa in that old fashioned lover-like way, he would have known that the engagement was not broken.

"And so, darling, you were afraid I had forgotten you," said Alice, her beautiful head resting on the bosom of her lover. "You thought that this change would alienate me; you were frightened away by this great, big old house."

"I was, I must confess I was," he answered.

With a smile, she wound her arm around his neck, drew his face down to hers, and tenderly kissing him, said:

"No, Fred; you will find me only the same little Alice whom you knew and loved on Calamity Row. Perhaps a little bold because I'm happier. The chief joy of it all is that you will share it with me, It is all yours as I am. It made no difference to you when you believed me a poor nameless girl, and I will make none now."

Fred thought of the struggle he had gone through to accept that difference when she was a nameless girl, but said nothing.

"Allie, did you tell your father of our engagement?"

"I did."

"Then what a coward I was! I told him with fear and trembling. But let us go and inform him that we have plighted anew—stronger than ever, and the day is fixed—when? set it, Allie, and make it right soon."

"Oh, let us consult papa first."

The Colonel enjoyed the joke immensely, and as a matter of punishment to Fred for his delay, put off the wedding for a year, with the condition that the student should then have completed his professional studies. Fred protested,but his future father-in-law was inexorable, and the day was fixed at twelve months from that time. Next week Fred Saunders took leave of his betrothed, and set out for home, accompanied part of the way by Dr. Morey and his young ward Jake.

A year lacking one week has passed. Col. Vanderburg, now a hale, hearty man, and his daughter, more beautiful than ever in her new happiness, have been out all the morning. It is only a week before the wedding day, and they have just been to see the Rev. William

Dempster, who is to officiate. They also visited Granny Gride, to see if her little store was sufficient for her wants, and then they called on Uncle Joe Ruggles in his neat up-town house, to invite him and his good wife to be present at their child's wedding, for they still called Allie their child. On the way down town they stopped a moment to see Mrs. Joyce, and have her promise to close up her establishment and come to the Vanderburg house until after the nuptials were solemnized. Next they went down to the dock to see a saucy yacht on which the bridal tour is to be taken. She has a breadth of beam and a capacity almost equal to those of an ocean schooner. The captain, in neat navy blue, walks about with the pride of a newly made admiral. He is lame, but one would hardly suppose he wore a cork leg. His eyes sparkle with pleasure; there is no happier man in all the navies of the world than the captain of this taut little craft which Col. Vanderburg has named the "Allie Gray." The Captain touches his cap to his visitors, and shows them to the various cabins, all neat and comfortable as a parlor. He assures them the "Allie Gray" could cross the ocean in perfect safety, and that a better rigged vessel is not afloat. Col. Vanderburg compliments him on his judgment and skill as a commander. The sailors all touch their caps as the Colonel and his queenly daughter pass. The yacht is thoroughly inspected and Alice expresses her delight to the captain, kisses his bronzed old cheek; and they return to their landau.

"Blow my eyes, Jack Bolin, if I believe your mission's quite over," said the cork-legged captain, brushing tears of happiness from his eyes.

After leaving the dock, Col. Vanderburg and his daughter drove to Greenwood Cemetery, and paused

where grass and flowers were growing above a recent grave. A large white monument bears the name.

AURELIA VANDERBURG.

The husband has had the body removed from the potters' field, where it lay, to his own family burying-ground. Father and daughter stand for some time in silence, gazing at the grassy mound and the fresh blooming flowers. There is a painful pleasure in standing at the graves of those whom we love. A tear strayed down the daughter's cheek and fell like a shattered crystal on the grave. The father kissed away its companion as he led her from the grave, and said:

"God has been very good to us, my darling. How much better our condition now, than two years ago. We know where she sleeps, and I have you with me. Then I had no one."

They were driven home. The postman had left two letters for Col. Vanderburg during his absence. One was post-marked Memphis, Tennessee, and the other was from St. Louis, Mo.

"I know whom this is from," said Allie taking up the letter mailed at Memphis. "I'm your little girl yet, and I'm going to take a daughter's privilege and open it." Her father did not forbid her. Seating herself on his knee and breaking the seal she took out a letter written in a coarse hand. "It's from uncle David Stonebeater, our dear 'Tennessee,' she cried joyfully. "and—and he is coming with his wife to the wedding. Oh, won't that be grand! Dear uncle David, I love him in spite of his odd ways."

"But here is another, my dear," said her father, sadly, holding up the second letter, which he had been reading, "Do you want to hear it?"

"Yes, papa, read it quickly, for Fred is coming to spend the evening with me, and I must fix up a little, you know."

"Listen, dearest, this is very sad," and the Colonel read

ST. LOUIS, MO., May 5th, 18—

DEAR UNCLE ROBERT:—Forgive an erring niece for addressing you in these endearing terms. I doubt whether I ought to write to you; but absolute want forces me to do so. I was sadly deceived in my husband; but I tried to love him and make the best of our marriage. We were poor and he was indolent. I have had to work like a slave to support myself and child. For the last week we have not had enough food to keep us from hunger. Mr. Harrison deserted me when my baby was only three weeks old; and I know not where he is. When he found he would get nothing by his marriage he grew tired of me. Let me come home as a servant. Help me, uncle, or we must perish. Your unfortunate niece, ADELAIDE.

The Colonel laid down the letter with a sigh, and turning to his daughter, whose eyes were full of tears, asked:

"What shall we do, darling?"

"Bring her home, by all means, papa, and provide for her and her poor little baby. If she has done wrong she is penitent and the baby is innocent. They must not suffer while we have plenty, and to spare. Bring them home and provide for them."

"We will, my dear."

THE END

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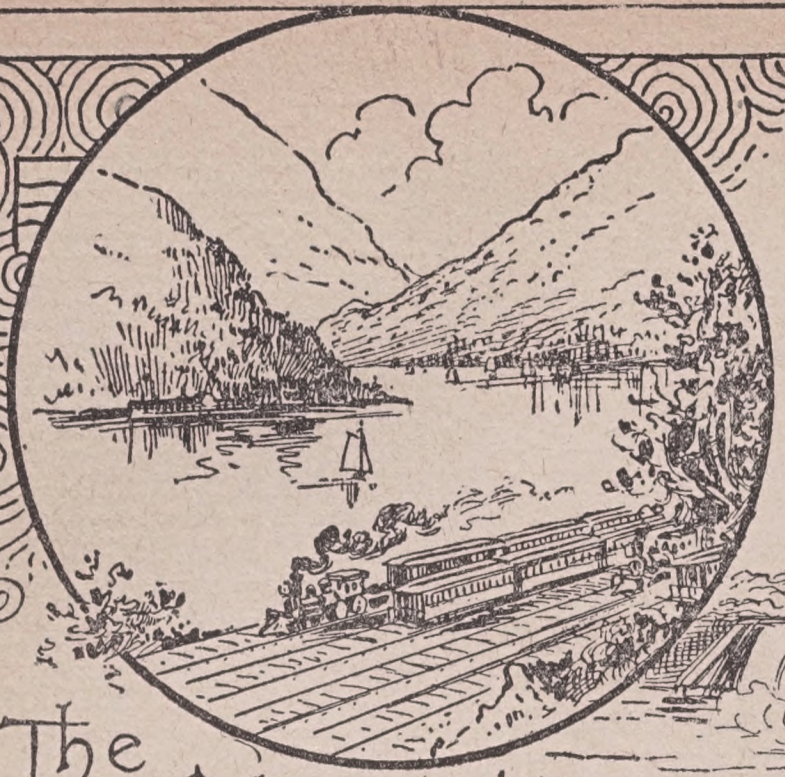

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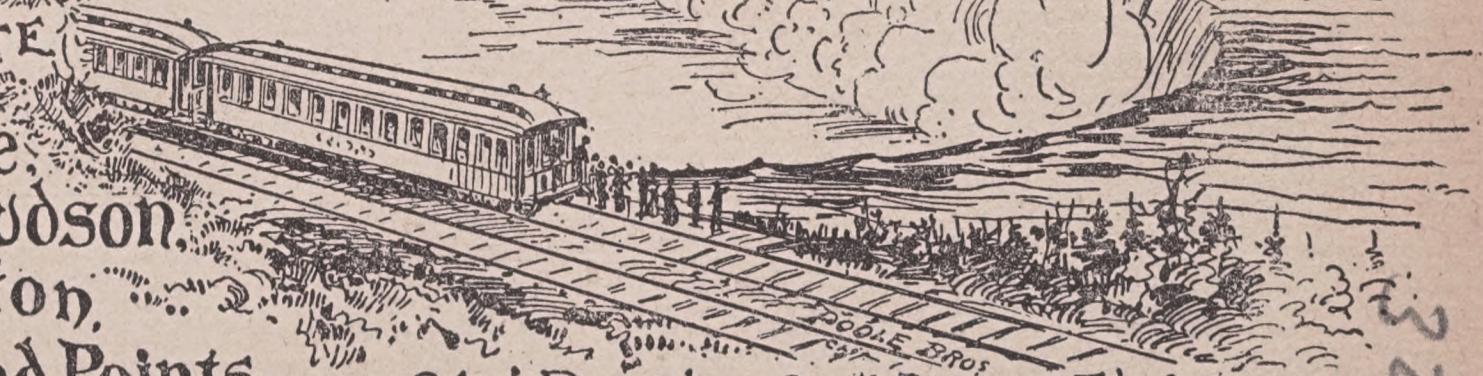

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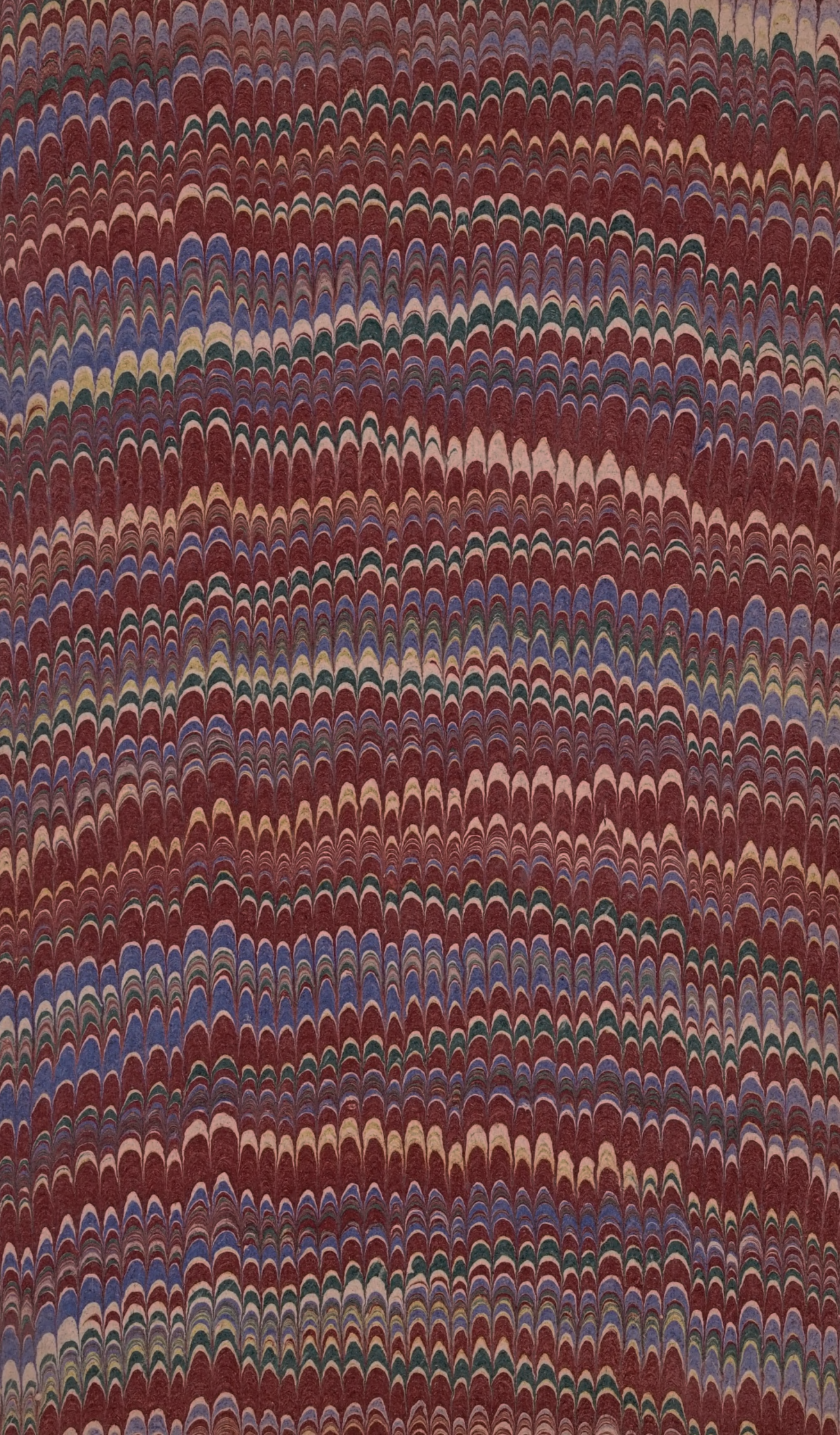

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